

A R T H U R ;

OR, THE

NORTHERN ENCHANTMENT.





A R T H U R;  
OR, THE  
NORTHERN ENCHANTMENT.

A  
POETICAL ROMANCE,

IN SEVEN BOOKS.

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By RICHARD HOLE, LL. B.

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*Le Donne, i Cavalier, l'arme, gli amori,  
Le Cortese, l'audaci imprese, io canto.*

ARIOSTO.

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## P R E F A C E.

THE existence of the hero celebrated in the following Poem, has been frequently controverted, on account of the fabulous exploits attributed to him; but certainly without sufficient reason. For is it not more natural to suppose that Fiction erected her airy superstructure on some acknowledged truth, than, that a long-established opinion held as true, should be founded on the basis of fiction? But whether the extraordinary narrative of Geoffrey of Monmouth, and the more consistent testimony of graver historians, outweighs or not the silence of Bede and Gildas, is of little consequence to the Arthur who now appears. He is merely an ideal personage; his achievements groundless and imaginary; not to be examined at the bar of historic truth, but of poetic credibility. The characters of the present Poem, indeed, will scarcely stand the test of that indulgent tribunal. Yet, as a writer's pretensions should be known before his merits and defects can be properly investigated, it may not, it is presumed, be improper to state the nature of them.

As an imitation of the old metrical Romance is intended, with some of its harsher features softened and modified, the incidents in this Poem are extravagant, and its heroes rather those of Ariosto than of Homer; not because the defultory wildness of the one, is preferred to the correct fancy of the other, for nothing new, probably, can be added to improve the plan of the regular epic as conceived by the latter, and every imitation must fall short of the original.—To follow his steps closely, would, however, show but little genius; and to deviate widely from the path chalked out by him, as little judgment. But the old Gothic fables exhibit a peculiarity of manners and situation, which, if not from their intrinsic excellence, may, from their being less hackneyed, afford more materials for the writer's imagination, and contribute more to the reader's entertainment. Some passages in these tales are, indeed, evidently derived from the classics, but most probably through the medium of Arabian authors; who, when Europe was sunk in ignorance, cultivated literature, and were no less remarkable for invention and fancy, than the Greeks and Romans for taste and judgment. Through the unnatural disguise in which the beauties of the

\* Arabian



\* Arabian Nights Entertainments are often enveloped, we may discover a strength of genius, liveliness of imagination, and many striking traits of genuine humour ; but the author's acquaintance with Homer is no less conspicuous.—The account of Sinbad and his companions' putting out the single eye of an Indian giant, is almost literally copied from the story of Ulysses and Polyphemus, in the ninth book of the *Odyssey*. That of queen Lobe and prince Beder, as strikingly resembles another of Circe and Ulysses in the tenth book : a medicated cake is the instrument of transformation in both. From Circe originates the Alcina of Ariosto, and Acrasia of Spenser ; and, what is rather remarkable, each of them inserts a circumstance mentioned by the Arabian, but not noted in Homer ; that of the metamorphosed gallants opposing the hero of the tale. How difficult is it

\* The genuineness of this performance has been fully established by col. Capper ; and a manuscript copy of it is now in the possession of Dr. White, Arabic professor in the University of Oxford. Should it receive the advantage of being translated by that gentleman, it would no longer be considered as a book chiefly calculated for the entertainment of children. The French translator, by endeavouring to accommodate Asiatic manners to those of his own country, has disfigured many of its characteristic features ; which are farther distorted in the English version taken from it.

to ascertain \* original invention, or trace poetic imitation ! Cervantes, it may be supposed, derived the idea of Clavileno from Pacolet's wooden horse, in the old French romance of Valentine and Orson : but most probably, that, and the Indian's enchanted steed in the ' Arabian Nights,' and Chaucer's " wondrous horse of brass," all originated from some oriental fable, composed in the

\* Christopher Sly and the Nobleman, in Shakespeare's Induction to *Taming the Shrew*, have their counterparts in Abun Hassan and the Caliph Harun Al-rashid. A similar anecdote is related as fact of Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy. As it cannot well be supposed that Shakespeare and the Arabian writer were conversant with each other's works, or that what the Asiatic feigned, the European practised, it may be conjectured that each tale had truth for its foundation. Whether the Arabian or Ariosto existed first, it may not possibly be easy to decide ; but the former's introductory story of Schariar and his brother, appears to have laid the foundation for the well-known tale of Astolpho and Jocundo, or to have been borrowed from it. Their conclusion, as the authors had different views, is indeed totally unlike. That the Asiatic was not unacquainted with the compositions of the West, appears pretty evident from several passages. The story of prince Codadad, particularly, in which the hero sallies forth in quest of adventures, kills a giant, and rescues a captive princess, is entirely formed upon the model of an old metrical romance. Can we imagine that such a resemblance sprung from accident, or a similarity of inventive powers ?—May we not rather exclaim with Yorick ; " What a prodigious traffic was carried on by the learned in these days !"

middle

middle ages, when the Saracens were adepts in chemistry, and addicted to magical pursuits.

With the fictions of the East, imported during the time of the Crusades, our old minstrels interwove the wild superstition of the times, and the fantastic exploits of Chivalry, a singular institution, that is thought to have existed in an imperfect state amidst the forests of Germany before the Christian æra. In the middle ages, during the night of ignorance and barbarism, it arose to splendor and magnificence ; and, like the *Aurora borealis*, a phænomenon no less strange than beautiful, gilded the darkness which enveloped the northern hemisphere ; inspired an elevation of sentiment and refinement of manners, unknown to the philosophy and religion of the times ; and in spite of its absurdities, still commands our respect and admiration. The old metrical romances, however uncouth their numbers, and extravagant their incidents, delighted our animated but unpolished forefathers. The idea, that their pictures, though coarsely sketched, were taken from the life, the boldness of their conceptions, and their grotesque beauties, notwithstanding the “plain homeliness” (to adopt a phrase of Sir Philip Sidney’s) in which they are invested, have likewise afforded the author greater pleasure than many correct, but uninteresting productions of more modern



modern times. Trusting that others might possess the same feelings, he has adopted such of their peculiarities as would afford the greatest scope for poetical imagery and description.

Though he dares not, therefore, claim originality, he has not unfrequently attempted it. He presumes not to congratulate himself on his success, being thoroughly convinced that memory is often mistaken for invention, and that a supposed novelty of ideas frequently originates from recollection only. Such a confession, he trusts, candour will not disapprove. What heroes, for instance, can be imagined, the archetypes of whose characters are not to be found in Homer? Can the warrior fall, but as they fell? Can he conquer, but like Achilles, or be lamented otherwise than Hector was lamented? His pictures were drawn from nature, and in proportion as a writer deviates from so accurate a copy, he must misrepresent the original.

External objects that strike the view, or sensations that arise internally to the mind, are likewise the sources from whence the poet must derive his materials:—But how few natural objects have eluded observation? what sensation or passion has remained undeveloped? To clothe in different language, to combine, separate, enlarge, or contract what has been said before, is nearly  
all



all that remains for the poet or the moralist. If it be alledged that the field of nature is unbounded, and diversified to infinity; yet our mode of expression is circumscribed. The same words, the same arrangement of diction, already in possession of our minds, must be again repeated, and give an air of plagiarisin even to original conception.—“*Male pereant qui ante nos nostra dixerunt!*” exclaimed † St. Jerom, on finding his observations anticipated by preceding writers. This remark was made by a cotemporary of our HERO’s (if his existence be allowed) at a time when the whole Roman Empire did not probably contain so many books as England now produces in half a century.

For unintentional plagiarisin, the author trusts no apology is necessary; nor, for such common images as poets have used, by a kind of prescriptive right, or rather by an authorised larceny, from Homer’s days to the present. He doubts, however, whether the free use he has made of some descriptions and allusions in the poems attributed to Ossian be equally excusable. To consider their originality is inconsistent with

\* The saying has likewise been attributed to his preceptor, Donatus the Grammarian.

the subject: to bear testimony to their beauties, is a duty which justice demands in return for the pleasure their perusal has afforded him. He would not venture to assert that they were absolutely and in every part genuine: yet he thinks he may safely affirm, that feeling and actual observation gave birth to some of the sentiments and imagery, which would have eluded the notice, or struck in a different manner the writer's imagination, who lived in a refined period of society.

The idea given of the Weird Sisters, or the Northern Parcæ, is neither strictly consistent with the Scandinavian mythology, nor with the wifches in Macbeth, of whom they were evidently the prototypes: it is rather formed out of both, and adapted, as well as the author could, to the genius of his Poem. In the one they are represented as beautiful virgins dwelling in Asgard, or city of the gods. In the other, they are degraded into mischievous hags, associating with dæmons at the "pit of Acheron." The frequent incursions made by the Scandinavians on the Highland Celts, and afterwards on their own countrymen settled in the more southern parts of Scotland, together with the introduction of Christianity, may tend to account for a change of sentiment concerning them, long before the days of Shakespeare.

Shakespeare. Yet, as Buchanan, and many of the earliest Scotch historians describe the appearance of the Weird Sisters very differently from him, it may be conjectured, that he designedly accommodated their manners and figure to our British Solomon's system of Dæmonology.

Some of the characteristic features of the Northern nations, at the time when the action of the Poem is supposed to have taken place, are attempted to be delineated. This mixture of Scandinavian manners with the ideal ones, as they are commonly imagined, of chivalry, requires an apology, or rather some explanation: for independent of the marvellous, they were really and originally the same. In the dark ages, the belief in enchantments, witches, ghosts, and fairies, universally prevailed. † In the Capitularies of Charlemagne, in the canons of several councils, and in the ancient laws of Norway, there are penal laws against such as raise storms and tempests; and our sailors formerly placed much more faith in the winds purchased of a Lapland witch, than the companions of Ulysses did in those given him by Æolus.—The following inscription ‡ in Runic characters on the tomb of a Gothic war-

† Mallet's Northern Antiquities, vol. ii.

‡ Ol. Mag. Hist. lib. i. cap. 39.



rior, is exactly descriptive of a hero in romance. "Demitor violentorum, ac defensor oppressorum, cicatricibus & senectute plenus, hic situs sum Ingolvus." The fair were held in as much honour by the former as by the latter. The Northern champions are described by historians travelling like knights errant in quest of adventures, defeating armies by their single prowess, rescuing princesses from captivity, and receiving their hands as a recompence for their valour. Nor is the account at all incredible: military glory was the ruling passion among the ancient Scandinavians; a strong and gallant man, trained from his youth in martial exercises, clothed in almost impenetrable armour, might easily overthrow, or put to flight, a number of ill-appointed opponents: and such we must imagine the generality of those who composed the rude armies in these barbarous times to have been. That during the feudal system, heiresses of great property should likewise be frequently carried off by violence, and held in durance by those who usurped their rights; that they should be often restored to them by brave and enterprising adventurers, and reward with their persons those, who, by delivering, shewed they could defend them, is certainly in every respect highly probable. Yet these are incidents on which the writers of romance



mance chiefly dwell. The description of tournaments is also a favourite topic with them, and in that they merely copy the manners of the times. “Vetus apud septentrionales principes ritus semper observatus fuerat, qui & moderno tempore ardentissimis exercitiis, & continuis studiis observatur, ut in publicis conventibus regum & principum, aut nobilium, nuptialibus festis, &c. frequentius fieri soleant diversi generis hastiludia, ac torneamenta; quandoque integris armis præliaribus, & contis acutis, vel causâ læsi honoris redintegrandi aut amplificandi: quandoque solâ galeâ in capite, thorace in pectore tectis, ob placidum clarissimarum, ac illustrium virginum, & matronarum favorem habitum aut habendum, &c.” Ol. Mag. lib. xv. cap. 18.

Some authors have conjectured that tournaments were introduced into Europe by the Arabians: others, that they were invented by the \* French. Either, or both, might institute particular ceremonies, and contribute in some respect to the parade and magnificence of these exhibitions, but they may be ultimately traced to an earlier period, and more unpolished people. The

\* Kennet, in the Glossary to his Parochial Antiquities, affirms that “tournaments are derived from the French *tourner*, to turn about; and were invented in France by Geffry de Pruilli, who was killed at Anjou, anno 1066.” The name, though not the custom, might originate in France, and be adopted by other nations.

† “choice

† “choice of the combat,” and “honour of the spear,” is mentioned in Ossian; and Fingal offers Swaran, a Scandinavian monarch, as a mark of amity and reconciliation, the “combat which *his fathers* gave to Trenmor.” An expression which seems to intimate, that tournaments, or some institution of a similar kind, were known to the northern nations, if not invented by them, in a very early period of society. Should Ossian’s authority be deemed suspicious, and testimony unsatisfactory, their antiquity, if not their origin, may be pretty clearly ascertained by a passage in the Edda, or Gothic system of mythology. In the 20th chapter the select heroes are described as daily entering the lists, clad in armour, and cutting each other in pieces. At the hour of repast, they again revive; remount their steeds, and return to enjoy the banquet prepared for them in the hall of Odin.

In Dr. Hurd’s Letters on Chivalry and Romance, those who wish to see the subject farther considered, will find many other instances of the manners in our early romances being drawn from nature, and consonant to the ideas of the times. The delineation, however, of these manners, has been but a secondary consideration. This performance is chiefly referred to the tribunal of Fancy, and if there condemned, it makes no farther appeal.

† See Fingal, B. 6. and note on the war of Inisthona.

A R T H U R;

OR, THE

NORTHERN ENCHANTMENT.

B O O K F I R S T.

## A R G U M E N T.

*IVAR*, son of *Melafchlen*, chief of the *Ebudæ*, or *Western Isles*, walking, towards night, by the sea-shore, views a fleet at a distance: is alarmed by the sound of horrible voices from the mountain *Conagra*. Beholds the *Weird Sisters* on its summit, performing their magic rites. A tempest, in consequence of them, ensues. On a warrior's being cast on the shore, the storm subsides. *Ivar* approaches him in a friendly manner; invites him to the hall of *Melafchlen*, where he was then feasting with his chiefs. *Melafchlen* endeavours to console his guest, who informs him that he was *Arthur*, heir to the throne of *Britain*, persecuted by the enmity of men and demons. Repines at providence. A dark cloud involves the room. *Merlin* appears, rebukes him for his rashness and credulity, in giving way to magic illusions, against which he had been forewarned; assures him that his fleet was in safety, and recommends resignation and fortitude. The prince, in obedience to him, retires to rest.



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A R T H U R;  
O R, T H E  
N O R T H E R N E N C H A N T M E N T.

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B O O K F I R S T.

PRAISE be the warrior's meed, who seeks to rise,  
By virtuous acts, by deeds of bold emprise,  
O'er dark oblivion; and in time's despight,  
Beneath whose wasteful course, in endless night,  
Succesfive ages sink, and pass unknown,  
Aspires to make futurity his own.

Such Arthur was: the song preserv'd his fame;  
And oft our fathers kindled at the name:  
When wand'ring minstrels to the feeling heart,  
The strains of nature, undeprav'd by art,  
Address'd; and crowded halls were taught to ring  
With the bold acts of Britain's matchless king.

B 2

Those

Those days are past : the vocal strain no more  
 Is heard, that charm'd our fathers' hearts of yore.  
 Now, sole memorial of their echoing halls,  
 Clasp'd by rude ivy, nod the mould'ring walls :  
 In cumb'rous heaps are stretch'd the stately towers,  
 While noxious weeds usurp the roseate bow'rs ;  
 And, long enfolded in death's cold embrace,  
 Silent have slept the minstrels' gentle race.

Yet still his name survives ; nor deem it vain,  
 That one, the meanest of the tuneful train,  
 Caught by the lofty theme, with feebl'r lays  
 Presumes t' unfold a tale of other days.  
 Such, as of old to Fancy's ear address'd,  
 Perchance had struck the sympathizing breast ;  
 When lovely were our maids, and brave our youth,  
 When virtue valour crown'd, and beauty truth.

'The day's bright ruler, from his airy steep  
 Descending, plung'd beneath the western deep ;  
 When, o'er the rocks that gird \*Ebuda's side,  
 Brave the wild winds, and surging waves deride,  
 The full-orb'd moon her radiant brow display'd,  
 And the blue sky in soften'd light array'd ;  
 With quivering lustre deck'd the purple flood,  
 And edg'd with silver gleams the dusky wood.

Ivar, who trac'd his birth from fires renown'd,  
 A generous youth, beside the vast profound,

\* The Western Isles were originally called Ebudæ. I have taken the liberty of particularising one by that general name.

In meditation wrapt, pursues his course  
Along the beach ; while with diminish'd force,  
Fainter and fainter, from the shelving shore  
The murmuring waves retreat with hollow roar.

Soon on th' horizon's utmost verge descry'd,  
A fleet, dim-gliding on the distant tide,  
Appears : at times the snow-white sails in light  
Are cloath'd, at times they vanish from his sight.

While o'er the main he bends his anxious eyes,  
From high Conagra dreadful sounds arise,  
Where darkly-frowning its projected steep  
In wide-stretch'd shade involves the roaring deep ;  
That king of mountains, whose proud height to  
gain,

The feeble race of man would toil in vain.  
On his astonish'd ear with hideous yell  
Thus burst the strain that awed the powers of hell:

“ Shall hated light still clothe these azure skies,  
Dæmons of dire revenge ?—awake, arise !  
Forego your dreary cells where horror reigns ;  
In gloom congenial wrap yon spangled plains !  
The vault of heaven with winds conflicting rend,  
And with the clouds the surging billows blend !—  
Say, must we vainly thus your aid invoke ?  
For this does blood upon your altars smoke ?  
Do we for this the souls of mortals fire  
With rage un pitying, and vindictive ire ?  
The race abhorr'd with causeless ills annoy,  
And aid your hate ? awake, arise, destroy !”

As





Thick and more thick; then to its height aspire,  
And form a rampart of encircling fire

But tho' in splendor rose the mountain's head,  
The robe of darkness o'er the sky was spread;  
Portentous darkness—" Powers of earth and air  
Ebuda's youth thus rais'd the suppliant prayer,  
Ye\*, who o'er nature's wide domains preside!  
Ye, who thro' boundless space benignly guide  
Heaven's cheering orbs! who thro' th' ethereal  
plain

Roll the deep thunder, or its rage restrain!  
Whose pow'r can check the lightning's darted ray,  
And bid the storm in whispers die away,  
Assist the race of man!—behold, unbound,  
The *Powers of evil* urge their wasteful round,  
The Dæmon of destruction is abroad,—  
And his yon dreadful scene!—Beneath his load  
Conagra trembles—bind, oh bind again  
This fury in your adamant chain!—"

He ceas'd; for echoing from the mountain's  
head,

Again the sounds that struck his soul with dread,  
More direful rose.—" Seize, seize, the fatal hour:  
On yonder fleet, the storm of vengeance pour!  
Descend ye clouds of death! ye fiends arise!  
Burst forth ye storms, and mingle seas and skies!"

\* The Celtic nations imagined that a number of Genii proceeded from one first great principle, and that each of them presided over his peculiar element.

And now the splendor that enclos'd the steep,  
In sparks of fire flew diverse o'er the deep,  
Kindling the nitrous clouds : with livid glare  
The lightning stream'd along the troubled air ,  
Tremendous thunder thro' the vast profound  
In peals redoubled roll'd its awful sound :  
In darkness sailing thro' th' affrighted skies  
The dæmons pour'd their death-denouncing cries.  
At times, their forms of dread the lurid light  
Disclos'd, and swell'd the horrors of the night.

Awhile the youth lay prostrate on the ground,  
When rous'd in terror by a mightier sound  
Of long-continu'd thunder, thro' the sky  
He mark'd with keener blaze the lightning fly :  
Saw, as it flash'd against Conagra's height,  
Out-jutting crags, and rocks of ponderous weight,  
Precipitate descend with hideous roar,  
And dash the wild waves o'er the trembling shore.

A mountain-billow burst before his view,  
And on the strand a hapless warrior threw.  
Sudden the raging winds their fury cease :  
The storm-vex'd waves subside, and sink to peace.  
Thro' scattering clouds, their fleecy robes in light  
Array'd, majestic towers the queen of night :  
Thick-gleaming stars the vault of heaven adorn,  
Like dew-drops glist'ning to the beam of morn.

Tho' soft compassion in the gentle breast  
Of Ivar swell'd, yet fear awhile repress

His

His doubtful steps ; he saw the stranger rise,  
And wildly roll around his wond'ring eyes.  
Stately his form ; and mingled in his face  
The charms of youth, and manhood's riper grace  
Vied for pre-eminence : a ponderous spear  
He held, that not the raging waves could tear  
From his strong grasp : his bosom oft he struck,  
And, upwards gazing, cast to heaven a look,  
In which indignant rage, with grief combin'd,  
Expressed the mix'd emotions of his mind.

The youth approach'd, and cried : " O chief  
unknown !

On our rough rocks by angry billows thrown,  
Accept my willing aid ; thy mien, thy face,  
Proclaim thee sprung from no ignoble race.  
But whoso'er thou art, 'tis ours to share,  
And sooth the woes that we alike may bear.  
O'er all those Isles, far as the eye can strain,  
Emerging darkly from the hoary main,  
My fire presides : to give affliction rest,  
And pour in sorrow's agonising breast  
Compassion's balm, is his ; and be it mine ;  
Nor thou the wishes of my soul decline,  
To guide thee to his friendly halls." He said ;  
The stranger sigh'd, and silent bow'd his head  
Assenting.—Soon the dome arose to sight,  
Crown'd with the silver moon's reflected light.

Melafchlen

Melafchlen there the splendid feast prepar'd,  
And there the soul-delighting sound was heard  
Of harps symphonious to the vocal lay,  
That gave the tale of times long past away ;  
Of conflicts fierce, of heroes far renown'd,  
And lovely maids whose smiles their prowess  
crown'd,

Or tears their tombs bedew'd, while borne on high  
Their spirits roam'd exulting thro' the sky.

" All hail ye warriors ! Thus the strain arose,  
Releas'd from mortal toils, from mortal woes :

'Tis yours aloft on billowy clouds to ride,  
Point the red lightning, and the thunder guide :

Or placid mid the blue expanse to stray,  
And sport along the liquid blaze of day !"

The king with joy his unknown guest receives ;  
His willing hand in pledge of friendship gives.

But not the plenteous feast, the flowing bowl,  
Or lofty lay, the stranger's woes controul.

The silent tear descends ; repeated sighs  
His bosom swell ; when thus Melafchlen cries :

" The secret anguish that thy soul devours  
Unfold ; to succour, not betray, is ours.

Thy state compassion claims, not hostile rage ;  
Ebuda's sons no war with mis'ry wage ;

Know, tho' thou com'st from Scandinavia's coast,  
The daring leader of a barb'rous host,

'That coast again unransom'd thou shalt view,  
And teach a ruthless race the stranger's due.

But



But if from Britain thou deriv'st thy birth,  
 Britain, whose glory fills the spacious earth—  
 And sure, unless the mist of age my sight  
 Deludes, thy garb bespeaks a British knight :  
 If such, thrice welcome to Ebuda's land :  
 The highest honour Arthur's friends demand.  
 For oh! what kingdom has not heard your praise,  
 The darling theme, the wonder of our days !  
 Who, like our prince, with ardent souls inspir'd,  
 Taught by his rules, by his example fir'd,  
 As stars, your radiant course of fame pursue  
 Round the bright orb from whence your beams  
     ye drew."

The stranger rose; Melaschlen's hand he prest,  
 And eager thus his gen'rous lost address :  
 " Has fame too partial told in distant lands  
 The deeds of Arthur ?—here that Arthur stands,  
 A hapless wretch : if he has aught to claim,  
 'Tis grief superior, not superior fame.  
 Behold a monument of wrath divine,  
 To wreck whose fall the fiends of hell combine  
 With mortal foes ; who, whelm'd beneath the  
     main,

A fate abhorr'd, beheld his gallant train.  
 He on the best of friends destruction draws ;  
 Alas ! their only crime was Arthur's cause.  
 And is it just, immortal ruler ! say,  
 That those should perish who thy will obey ?

Whilst

Whilst on an impious race thy blessings show'r,  
Who mock thy sacred laws, and brave thy  
pow'r?"

No more he said ;—for lo! in sudden gloom  
A rushing cloud involves the spacious room ;  
And, quick-dispersing, by his side is seen  
A rev'rend sage of awe-commanding mien.  
Robes, whose pure whiteness match'd the new-  
fall'n snow,

Invest his form, and on the pavement flow :  
The purple girdle, that around his waist,  
Studded with sparkling gems, the vesture brac'd,  
Shot mingled beams of light : his head was bare ;  
His brow imprinted with the tracks of care :  
A few grey locks his temples crown'd ; the  
wreath

Of honour'd age : his ample chest beneath,  
White as the thistle's silv'ry down, that plays  
On zephyr's wing amid the summer rays,  
His flowing beard descended : in his hand  
Appear'd, with mystic figures grav'd, a wand  
Of wond'rous pow'r.—Whilst in his breast the  
fighs

Of pity rose, wrath sparkled in his eyes :  
Full on the prince he turn'd their piercing light,  
Who shrunk abash'd, astonish'd at the sight.  
Sternly he thus began :—"Th' eternal will  
It is not ours to question, but fulfil.

High

High heaven permits those evils men create ;  
 Whilst they, what folly caus'd, impute to fate.  
 'Twas known to thee thy ruin would be fought  
 By hell and hell-born powers with malice fraught ;  
 No less, than that thro' me, indulgent heaven  
 Sufficient strength t' oppose their rage had given.  
 I warn'd thee never to forsake the host  
 Collected to redeem thy native coast.

Who shar'd thy dangers, well deserv'd thy care ;  
 'Twas thine the fortunes of thy friends to share "

" Forgive me, father ! thus the prince replied,  
 Forgive thy erring son, too harshly tried ;  
 How could I act ? I saw my vessels tost  
 By raging billows ; some on quicksands lost ;  
 Some dash'd on pointed rocks : loud roar'd the  
                   found

Of elements conflicting : wide around  
 Fell dæmons shriek'd, and in the boldest heart  
 Fix'd deep dismay, and terror's scorpion dart.  
 Yet then, be witness thou celestial power,  
 E'en at that dread, that soul-distracting hour,  
 When death impended, and confusion reign'd,  
 My heart, resolv'd, unmanly fear disdain'd,  
 The trembling seamen I adjur'd in vain  
 To work their vessels thro' the boiling main.  
 While pale, desponding, in the hold they lay,  
 I faced night's horrors, tho' the blasting ray  
                                           Flash'd

Flash'd round my temples : when each mast and  
shroud

Was wrapt in flames ; when, like a vaulted cloud,  
Impended o'er my head the hollow wave,  
And its dark womb appear'd a watry grave ;  
To die as suits a warrior all my care,  
Beside the trembling mast the threat'ning spear  
I shook ; the powers of darkness loud defied.—  
Before me \* Gawaine stood, and eager cried,  
With friendly voice : “ Behold, enclos'd between  
Yon wide-projecting rocks, a fairer scene  
Unfolds ; no billows there tumultuous roar ;  
Smooth flow the waters o'er the level shore ;  
And t'ward our ship, thanks to propitious heav'n !  
Before the storm a slender bark is driven.

\* Gawaine is highly celebrated in many old romances for his courtesy (no secondary virtue in a barbarous age) and attachment to Arthur. An extraordinary instance of both is given in an old ballad in Percy's Collection, vol. iii. p. 11. Mr. Whitaker † supposes him to have had a real existence, and to have reigned in Galloway long after the death of Arthur. “ In the yeere 1037, according to Stow, in a province of Wales called Rose, was found the sepulchre of Wawyn, or Gawen, upon the sea-shore. He was sister's sonne to Arthur, the great king of the Brytains, being, as is affirmed by many, of the length of fourteen foote. He raigned in the parts of Brytaine, which to this day (saith Windover) is called Walwith. A most famous man in warre, and in all manner of civilitie, as in the actes of Brytaine is declared.”

† Hist. of Manchester, vol. ii. p. 94, 2d edit.

Haste,



Haste, let us seek the coast : no more delay—  
The shatter'd vessel sinks—'tis death to stay !”

Nor vain were Gawaine's words : I plain beheld  
The shelter'd bay, where, wave on wave impell'd,  
Screen'd from the tempest, with diminish'd force  
In slow succession urg'd their peaceful course ;  
And sudden, by my friend's example taught,  
I leapt into the bark :—that instant, thought  
And memory possess'd my soul no more.—

Faint and exhausted on Ebuda's shore

I wak'd to life ; and to these chiefs I owe

Such acts of friendship, as the sons of woe

Receive from virtue's hand.” The sage rejoin'd,

Frowning severe : “ Oh, impotent of mind,

By fraud misled, to thwart what heav'n decreed,

And meanly quit the host 'twas thine to lead

In Britain's cause—No Gawaine met thine eyes,

But hell-born Urda in the youth's disguise :

No friendly bark approach'd thy vessel's side ;

Thy rashness plung'd thee in the roaring tide.

No beach was there, to fancy's view display'd

So smooth, but pointed rocks beneath the shade

Of dark Conagra ; from whose frowning height

Huge fragments fell ; and crush'd beneath their  
weight

Then hadst thou perish'd ; but high heav'n,

whose will

'Tis mine, its humble agent, to fulfil,

Endu'd

Endu'd thy friend with more than mortal power  
To save thee in that dread, disastrous hour.  
I turn'd the loud-descending rocks aside,  
And calm'd the fury of th' indignant tide.  
Hadst thou my counsel in thy heart engrav'd,  
And, trusting heav'n, the powers of magic brav'd,  
Those envious fiends had mourn'd their malice  
vain,

And fled, defeated, from the troubled main.  
Then prosperous breezes to Menevia's coast  
Had wafted Arthur, and his valiant host;  
Where many a friend now bends his anxious eyes  
O'er the dark wave to view thy sails arise.  
Yet never let distrust, nor mean despair,  
Usurp thy bosom. Heaven's peculiar care  
Still watches o'er thee; to the power divine  
Submissive bow—'tis impious to repine.  
'Twas given the Weird Sisters to annoy  
With raging storms thy fleet, but not destroy.  
Illusions vain, the phantoms of the night,  
Beguil'd thy reason, and deceiv'd thy sight.  
When heav'nly goodness wills, 'tis his to quell  
Fraud's black designs, and blast the arts of hell;  
Or fierce Destruction, loosen'd from her chain,  
Would waste the world, and ceaseless horrors  
reign.

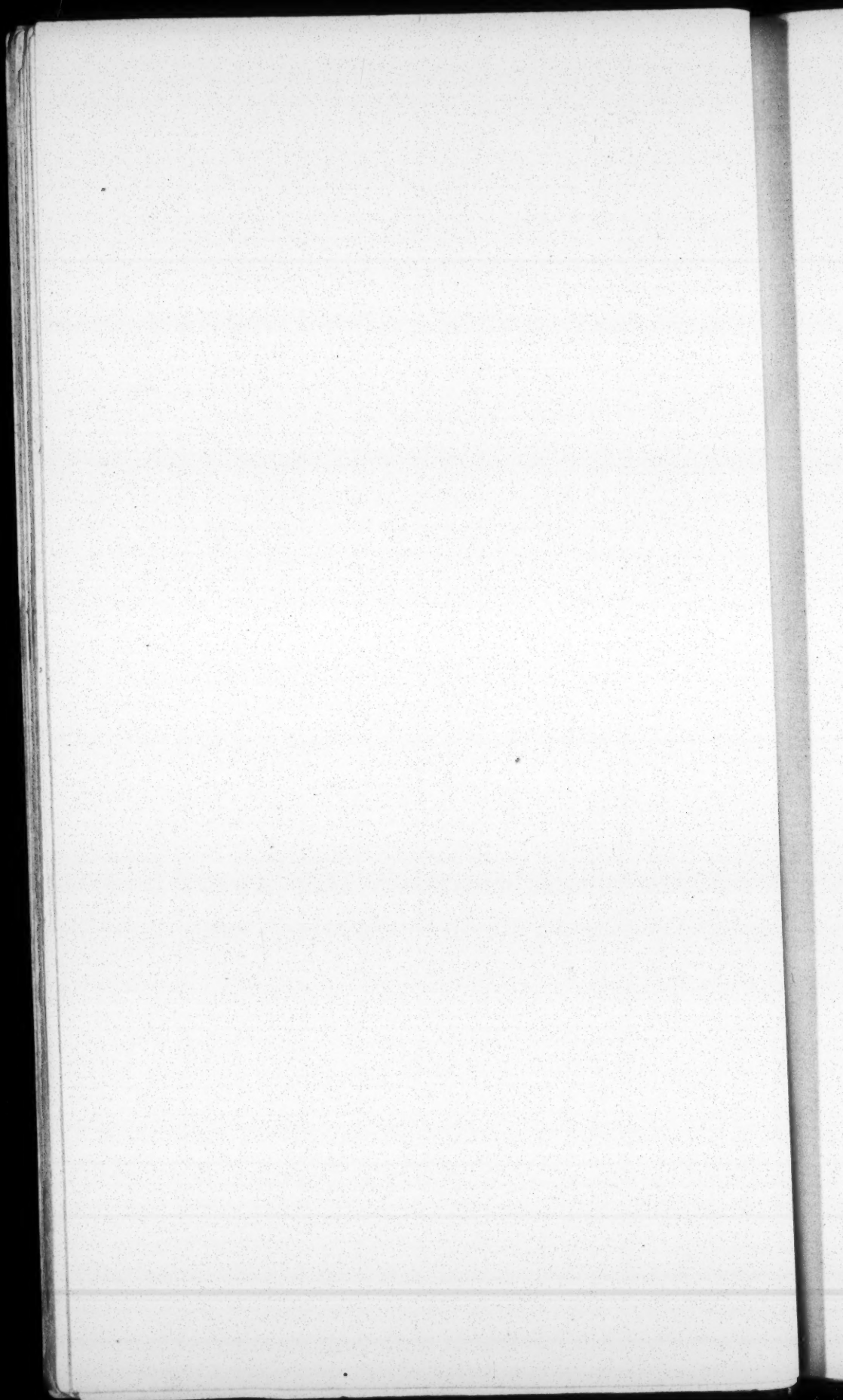
May that reflection sooth thy soul to peace,  
And idle murmurs, vain upbraidings cease."

" I fell,

“ I feel, I own my fault, cried Uther’s heir,  
And heaven’s decrees are righteous, tho’ severe.  
Yet grant me this request : have I betray’d  
To danger, or distress, my lovely maid ?  
Ills heaped on ills with patience I’ll endure,  
And brave their rage, if Inogen’s secure.”

“ She dwells in safety, thus the sage replied ;  
In my protection, and her faith confide.  
But oh ! let different thoughts thy soul employ ;  
Dream not of beauty’s charms, or peaceful joy,  
When glory calls.—To my prophetic eyes  
Perils and toils t’ obstruct thy course arise.  
If Arthur fails in aught that suits the brave,  
He sinks disgrac’d to an untimely grave.  
Now, since thy harass’d frame demands repose,  
In slumber seek oblivion of the woes  
That still disturb thy mind.” The prince obey’d,  
His hand submissive on his bosom laid,  
And as he sought the downy bower of rest,  
Check’d the soft sigh that struggled in his breast.

END OF BOOK FIRST.





A R T H U R;

OR, THE

NORTHERN ENCHANTMENT.

B O O K S E C O N D.

C 2

## A R G U M E N T.

*MERLIN* narrates occurrences previous to the opening of the poem. A daughter, called *Inogen*, is born to him at an advanced period of life. A prophecy concerning her, on account of its ambiguity, excites both joy and apprehension in his mind. He retires with her to a solitary place near the river *Deva*. Returns to *Carlisle*, and is received by *Uther* with great joy. *Arthur* arrives, after an expedition into the East (in which he had acquired great honour), at the same time. A mutual attachment takes place between him and *Inogen*. A tournament. *Hengist*, the Saxon king, distinguishes himself; professes his love to *Inogen*. *Arthur* defies him; a tumult ensues, which *Uther* quells, and banishes *Arthur* from his court. *Hengist* behaves with insolence towards *Uther* and the Britons. While *Merlin* is musing on their unhappy situation, *Cador*, a youth nearly related to and esteemed by *Arthur*, informs him, that he had followed the prince, and seen him embark for the desert Isle of *Ligon* with ten of his bravest knights; expecting there to meet *Hengist*, with an equal number of his, to decide their pretensions to *Inogen* by combat. On returning, he heard that Britain was invaded in different parts by the northern nations; that *Hengist* had forfeited his engagement to meet *Arthur*; that he certainly meant to besiege the Britons in *Carlisle*; and that *Uther* was then dying, worn out with age and grief. He advises *Merlin* to seek for safety with *Inogen* in flight. *Merlin* returns with her to his former retreat. Wanders at a distance from it; enters a wood, and reposes himself under a large oak near a Druidical circle of stones. The genius of the island appears to him in a dream. Informs him that the *Weird Sisters*, dreading the future glory of *Arthur*, had, by the power of magic, at his birth, and that of *Inogen*, involved them in the greatest difficulties and dangers; such, as they could not escape without superior assistance. He directs him to counteract their designs, and, by means of a wand endued with secret virtue, to form an enchanted bower which should conceal *Inogen* from *Hengist*; and which she should by no means quit without his consent. He bids him advise *Arthur* to collect succours from the nations allied to Britain, and on no account to forsake them till they arrived there. *Merlin* awakes; encloses *Inogen*, and *Ellena* her friend, within a magic bower. *Arthur* complies with his directions in collecting troops from the kingdoms allied to Britain; but, by neglecting his promise not to forsake them, is exposed to fresh dangers and distress. *Merlin* here concludes his narration.

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A R T H U R;  
OR, THE  
NORTHERN ENCHANTMENT.

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B O O K S E C O N D.

WITH reverence struck, Ebuda's ruler views  
His awful guest, who thus his speech renews :  
“ Time-honor'd chief, and you, ye generous band,  
Who, lost in wonder at my presence stand :  
Tho' silence chains your voice, each look enquires  
Who, and from whence I am—to your desires  
My will accords. No wretch in magic lore  
Deep vers'd, who summons from th' infernal shore  
Malignant fiends, to overwhelm mankind in woes,  
And nature's laws, and heaven's decrees oppose,  
Am I—tho' never known to martial fame,  
You may perchance have heard of Merlin's name.  
In

In peaceful ease, for ne'er my bosom felt  
Ambition's pangs, in Uther's court I dwelt  
For many a year with a lov'd consort blest,  
Whose soul each female excellence possess'd.  
To calm content I gave my youthful prime,  
Unnoticed past the silent lapse of time:  
The light-wing'd hours dispensing pleasure flew:  
No varied fortune stain'd their radiant hue.

At length to transport grew my full delight,  
An unexpected offspring blest my fight,  
Child of my failing years.—But such our state,  
When man is most assur'd of bliss, elate  
With air-form'd visions, sudden intervene  
Sorrow's black clouds, and blait the flatt'ring scene;  
And the rapt mind, so busily employ'd,  
Becomes a dreary blank—a hideous void.  
That sun, which rising in the eastern skies  
Beheld a lovely daughter bless my eyes;  
Ere in the west was sunk his glimmering ray,  
Beheld the mother turn'd to breathless clay:  
And I—but how ungrateful to repine!  
No common joys for many a year were mine!

By slow degrees I felt th' impetuous tide  
Of turbid grief, and dark despair subside.  
When at the font, as Christian rites ordain,  
To free her soul from sin's polluting stain,  
The child was brought; before the hallow'd shrine,  
The white-rob'd priest implor'd the power divine

His



His guardian wings of mercy to extend,  
With joys to crown her, and from ills defend.

No sooner was perform'd the mystic rite,  
Than on the babe he fix'd his eager sight,  
And cried ; “ Sweet child ! a wondrous fate is  
          thine,

Doom'd in severest woe thro' life to pine,  
Unless thou fleest from him thy soul approves,  
And he rejects thee who most dearly loves :  
Yet whoso'er in wedlock takes thy hand,  
Reigns from that hour supreme in Britain's land :  
Beneath his matchless force his foes shall bend,  
And to remotest realms his fame extend.”

As thus the seer the dark decrees of fate  
Unfolded, on each brow amazement fate.  
On all who heard strict silence I impos'd,  
Nor they th' ambiguous oracle disclos'd.  
While hope and dread possess'd my anxious mind,  
To make her worthy of the state design'd  
By heav'n, was long my sole employ ; the maid  
My wishes blest, and every care repaid.  
As time advanc'd, with secret joy I found  
Her form, her mind with each perfection crown'd.  
Forgive those praises on a darling child,  
Whose smiles so oft affliction's pangs beguil'd—  
Tired of mankind, and grandeur's irksome weight,  
With her I sojourn'd in a lone retreat

By

By\* Deva's stream, 'mid vales and mountains rude,  
Sweet to the pensive mind is solitude.

Most sweet to study nature's secret laws,  
And trace her wonders to the primal cause.

What deep instruction the reflecting mind,  
Benignant nature, in thy works can find !  
The leaf that quivers in th' autumnal gale,  
The flower of spring that in the lonely vale  
Blooms unregarded, equally proclaim,  
With yonder orbs that deck th' ethereal frame,  
Their great Creator's wisdom.—Thus retir'd  
To live and die was all my soul desir'd.  
But not to me was heaven's high will unknown,  
That man was made not for himself alone.  
Shall I, my Inogen, in beauty's bloom,  
Thus keep sequester'd in the forest gloom ?  
And shall the fairest flower that decks the spring,  
Lavish its sweets on zephyr's idle wing,  
That fans the desert ?—Soon again would fade  
Hope's flattering scenes in doubt's distressful shade.  
Dark were the prophet's words ; but to resign  
Submissive to the will of heaven was mine.

At length resolv'd, but with reluctant heart,  
From my sequester'd bower I slow depart.  
Bid to each scene, by time endear'd, adieu ;  
And often turn, and take a lingering view.

\* The river Dee, which rises from the mountain Raurau-  
vaur, in Merionethshire.

Not so the maid, her sparkling eyes confess  
The secret pleasure that inspir'd her breast.

How sweet the world's delights at distance eyed!  
How bright to fancy's view each joy untried!  
Alas! when nearer placed, and duly weigh'd,  
They prove an idle dream,—a vacant shade.  
Experienc'd age alone, sad privilege, knows  
Our joys are fleeting, permanent our woes.  
But, to this mournful truth the youthful mind  
Still, as it wont, let sweet delusion blind!  
For all the pleasures cruel fate denies,  
Hope can prevent, and fancy realize.

To \* Caerlile's towers we came; with joy possess'd,  
Old Uther clasp'd me to his friendly breast;  
And grateful praises on the maid bestow'd,  
While her warm cheeks with bashful pleasure  
glow'd.

“And is my friend, he cried, at length return'd,  
Whose cruel absence I so long have mourn'd?  
Never, O Merlin! shall I cease to pay  
My thanks to heaven for this auspicious day,

\* Carlisle is said to have taken its name from a king Leil, an imaginary descendant of Brutus, who reigned A. M. 3021. He is supposed to have built it, and to have been buried there. Arthur is frequently represented, by our old minstrels, as holding his court in that city; and in the neighbourhood of it many romantic adventures are related as performed by himself and his knights.

With



With double blessings crown'd : my gallant son,  
Who glory's course for six long years has run,  
(Whom the great chief who sways Byzantium's  
                throne,

E'en in his dawn of youth was pleas'd to own  
His favor'd knight! while rage and wonder swell'd  
His peers' indignant breasts, as they beheld  
A beardless boy, till then unknown, exceed  
Their martial acts, and win fame's brightest meed)  
My much-lov'd Arthur comes, who late unfurl'd  
Britannia's standard to the eastern world.

Then the red-cross thro' air triumphant flew,  
And the pale crescent faded at the view.  
Then sunk in deep dismay the Paynim race;  
Whilst, whirl'd by giant arms the iron mace,  
And beam-like spear oppos'd his might in vain—  
Sad Asia mourn'd her bravest champions slain.  
And, hark! those joyful shouts that rend the sky,  
Mix'd with the clarion's voice, proclaim him nigh."

To hail the valiant youth he bends his way :  
We, from the walls, his glad approach survey.  
His martial mien with pleasure strikes our view ;  
The sculptur'd helm, the plume of snowy hue :  
The splendid mail, the purple-tinctur'd vest,  
And star-deck'd baldrick flaming on his breast.  
As nearer he advanc'd, we mark'd his face  
Crown'd with each charm, and soft attractive  
                grace.

Smiles



Smiles cloth'd his roseate cheeks ; but in his eyes  
Dwelt valour's flame ; not like the beams that rise  
To gild the storm, but lovely as the ray  
Whose purple tints proclaim the dawning day.

Full fifty gallant knights the prince surround,  
Their fiery courfers o'er the champain bound.  
All sprung of noble race, their country's pride,  
Who scorning courtly ease, by Arthur's side,  
Had oft in fields of blood approv'd their might ;  
His friends in peace, his brothers in the fight.

Then many a groaning wain, and lofty car  
Roll onward, glittering with the spoils of war.  
The squires succeed ; and last th' attendant train  
With spears erected, sweep along the plain.

Day following day still tended to increase  
Old Uther's heart-felt bliss ; the hours of peace  
Beheld his son for sternest acts renown'd,  
With every grace and milder virtue crown'd.

Nor less perchance my joy : the prince resign'd  
To me his conduct : form'd his willing mind  
By my instructive lore.—How soon engage  
Youth's kind attentions the regard of age !

Yet was I not, O chief ! so weak, so vain,  
To deem my merits could alone obtain  
The wond'rous favour ; no, I plain beheld  
The lofty soul that danger never quell'd  
E'en in its direst form, oft shrink afraid  
From the meek glances of my timid maid :

Who

Who soon to me her mutual love confest ;  
For falshood dwelt not in her gentle breast.

Memorial of the day, when crown'd with fame,  
The prince triumphant to his country came,  
A tournament the king prepar'd ; afar  
The joyful tidings reach'd the sons of war,  
Who cross'd innumerable the swelling main  
To prove their valour on the lifted plain.

As judges of the field in royal state,  
Old Uther and his son exalted fate :  
The peers, and age-worn knights were rang'd  
    around,  
And high-born dames, with wondrous beauty  
    crown'd.

But all confest, in loveliness array'd,  
None shone superior to my darling maid ;  
Who, such the monarch's will, each prize bestow'd :  
The prosperous champions breast with transport  
    glow'd :

And her applause more genuine joy inspir'd,  
Than the rich meed by martial feats acquir'd.

The knights of British race for many a day  
Successful, bear the prize of fame away.  
Not long they triumph—Valdemar appears ;  
His ponderous lance the gloomy Hengist rears.  
From mighty Odin both their lineage trace,  
And claim a god, the father of their race.

As

As thundering thro' the lists they urge their courſe,  
The boldeſt Britons ſink beneath their force.  
The Saxon ſceptre far-fam'd Hengiſt ſway'd,  
And Valdemar, the Dacian realm obey'd.  
Oft had the fiery chiefs, oppos'd in arms,  
The North's bleak regions ſhook with loud alarms;  
Till Thora, ſiſter of the Saxon lord,  
Controul'd the ravage of the waſteful ſword.  
By Valdemar belov'd, ſhe ſmiled to peace  
The ſtorm of wrath, and bade contention ceaſe.  
United now by blood, and friendſhip's tie,  
The fearleſs chiefs the world in arms defy.  
At length the marſhals of the field proclaim  
The Saxon monarch firſt in knightly fame.  
From Inogen's fair hand the victor's prize  
Low-bending he receives; then proudly cries:

“'Tis beauty's beam the warrior's ſoul inſpires;  
Hengiſt thro' thee the meed of fame acquires;  
'Twere raſh preſumption ere my might was prov'd,  
To claim the beauteous maid ſo dearly lov'd:  
But ſince to boaſt unrivall'd charms is thine,  
And ours unequal'd in the field to ſhine”—  
Loud-interrupting, Arthur thus replies:  
Wrath bluſh'd his cheek, and ſparkled in his eyes.

“Vaunt not unequal'd force, vain-glorious  
knight!  
Crown'd with the honors of a mimic fight.

Had



Had I contended !—but I scorn the boast—  
Unsheath thy falchion :—prove, who merits most  
The peerless maid—thus arm'd alone, I trust  
Pride's towering crest to humble in the dust."

He leapt into the list, and wav'd his sword  
Loud-threatning : forward rush'd the Saxon lord.  
'The marshals of the field, and knightly train  
Between them sudden close, and render vain  
Wrath's heedless efforts: with indignant eyes,  
Grasping their spears, the friends of Hengist rise,  
And menace fierce :—with mutual fury burns  
Each British youth, and threat for threat returns.

The hoary king arising, thus controuls  
The fury kindled in their swelling souls :  
" Warriors ! I call'd you to the feast of joy ;  
It is not ours the stranger to annoy,  
Or wrong th' invited guest. That act of shame,  
I trust, shall never stain a Briton's fame.  
Who dares against you lift the threatning steel,  
Provokes my anger, and its weight shall feel.  
Arthur, if aught avails thy fire's behest,  
If filial duty dwells within thy breast,  
I charge thee from our peaceful court retire,  
Nor dare provoke a king, and father's ire.  
Did valorous acts in love ensure success,  
The smiles of Inogen, brave chief ! must bless  
Thy generous suit ; but if she prove unkind,  
It is not ours to force th' unwilling mind.

Meantime



Meantime partake each hospitable right,  
With festive pleasures crown each circling night,  
With sports the day; till comes th' appointed time,  
Then graced with favors, to his native clime  
Each knight returns." His words the martial train  
Applaud, and discord lights her torch in vain.  
The prince, meanwhile, his breast with anguish  
                  torn,

Directs his way thro' lonely woods, forlorn.  
Now on the triumph of the Saxon knight,  
His suit presumptuous, and forbidden fight,  
Enrag'd he muses : soon, that rage resign'd,  
His father's anger rises on his mind.

Alas ! the seeming wrath from kindness sprung,  
Affection only from his bosom wrung  
The stern rebuke : Hengist's unequal'd might  
He wondering mark'd, and trembled at the sight.  
And now in secret joy exulting, thought  
His prudence had his son's protection wrought.

How vain, alas ! the schemes by mortals plan'd,  
Unless directed by th' eternal hand.  
Our weak devices to destruction tend,  
And counteract themselves their destin'd end.  
Unhappy king ! exil'd by thy decree  
Is that brave son whom thou no more shalt see ;  
Who only could, if heaven so will'd, oppose  
The dark designs of thy perfidious foes.

For

For now when Hengist saw the constant maid  
His vows of love with cold neglect repaid ;  
His chang'd demeanor we with grief espied :  
His eyes beam'd fury, and his brows of pride  
Were cloath'd in frowns, each circling day resort  
New bands of warriors to our peaceful court,  
Friends to the Saxon monarch.—Britain's lord,  
With sorrow's shafts his care-worn bosom gor'd,  
In secret issues his commands, and calls  
His son, his absent knights to Carlile's walls.  
If unavailing prov'd his mild request,  
That force might free him from his lordly guest.

As sadly-pensive in my bower I fate,  
Deep-musing on the dark decrees of fate ;  
'Twas at the close of eve, when twilight grey  
Mark'd the last glimmering hour of parting day)  
A youth, by virtue's bonds and blood allied  
To Britain's prince, approach'd and mournful  
cried :

“ Dire is the tale that Cador must disclose,  
And dark the prospect of impending woes.  
When Arthur, by his father's stern behest  
Forsook our court, my rapid steed I prest,  
With friendship's voice his drooping soul to  
cheer :

But vainly fought him through the forest drear.  
Directed by some swains I still pursued  
My course : on Humber's beach the prince I  
view'd

Reining

Reining his fiery steed : in martial pride  
Ten youthful knights rode graceful by his side ;  
Each knight for martial acts a mighty name,  
Whose praise had often swell'd the trump of fame.

He mark'd my swift approach, and o'er the  
strand

His courser urg'd, then kindly grasp'd my hand,  
And cried, " To Cadur I with joy impart  
The thoughts that long have labour'd in my heart.  
Well may'st thou judge what rage my bosom stung  
At Hengist's vaunt ; my soul what anguish wrung  
At Uther's speech severe—'Thro' terrors vain  
Meant he to screen me from the lifted plain ?  
Or, direr thought ! give her whose form ador'd  
Reigns in my bosom, to the Saxon lord ?

While thus distracting thoughts my bosom rend,  
A bold defiance to the knight I send.

" If still he dar'd his idle vaunt maintain,  
With ten, the bravest of his martial train.  
On \* Ligon's desert isle, in equal fight,  
'Gainst equal numbers to approve his might.  
My challenge he accepts, as suits the brave ;  
And with the dawn we stem the foaming wave.  
Nor long I trust shall we the foe expect ;  
The valiant dare not honour's call neglect.

\* A small island near Guernsey.



Haste then, my friend ! to aged Uther haste :  
 Tell him, my soul laments its frenzy past,  
 When fierce resentment kindling in my breast,  
 I dar'd to mortal strife his haughty guest ;  
 But he, a guest no more, I justly claim  
 A warrior's right to vindicate my fame.  
 Bid \* Lancelot, who in th' embattled plain  
 Ne'er shrunk from Arthur's side, his grief restrain,

\* Lancelot is supposed, by Mr. Whitaker †, to have been king of some Northern Province of Britain ; and his name to be derived from the following Celtic words : *Lance*, a spear ; and *Leod*, *Lod*, or *Lot*, people. According to Pliny (l. vii. c. 56.) the lance was invented by the Ætolians. But Aulus Gellius (l. 15. c. 30. quotes the authority of Varro ; and Oisellus, in a more ample manner, endeavours to shew that the Romans derived the word *Lancea* from the Spaniards, who still retain that of *Lanca* to signify the same weapon ; which, he asserts, was its common appellation among the Celtic nations in general. Diodorus Siculus (l. 5.) says of the Gauls and Germans, that παραβαλλονται δε λογχας ας κεινοι λογκιας καλεσι. It is supposed by some antiquaries, that ancient Greece and Italy were peopled by the Celts. If so, we may conclude, that the Greek Λογχη and Roman *Lancea*, were derived from what, it is probable, most people esteem a modern English word. Dr. Swift in deriving the names of classical heroes from the present language, by way of burlesque on etymological enquiries, might have stumbled on some genuine Celtic word, and, in his pursuit of ridicule, have shewn the credibility of what he thought and meant to represent as absurd and impossible.

† Hist. of Manchester, vol. ii. p. 51. 2d edit.



That thus without his aid we wage the fight;  
His faith's unquestion'd, and confess his might.  
But Uther, in the vale of years declin'd,  
May need his prowess and experienc'd mind.  
Sooth my lov'd maid; assure her that this breast  
No doubt injurious to her faith possesseth:  
But ill he merits her who suffers wrongs,  
And just revenge to hostile vaunts belongs.  
May no vain fears her tender bosom tear;  
Her winning smiles let Inogen prepare,  
And words of joy my glad return to bless—  
The cause, if weak my arm, must give success."

Much long'd my soul to join the gallant train,  
But well I knew th' aspiring wish was vain.  
Joy fate on every brow, their hearts beat high;  
And dauntless valour beam'd in every eye.

At morn, their vessel fades before my view;  
Again to Uther's court I sad pursue  
My toilsome course; while rumour to my ears,  
As on I pass, the tale of sorrow bears;  
That the rude North had pour'd her iron swarms  
On Britain's coast:—Here flam'd the Saxon arms,  
There rag'd the Dane: here Norway's ruthless  
band

Spread death and havock o'er this hapless land.  
In Hengist's aid advance the savage race,  
That stain to honor, knighthood's foul disgrace.

Regardless of his fame, th' appointed fight  
 Neglecting, by these walls he met my fight,  
 Surrounded by his chiefs; and as I past,  
 The cloud of wrath his threatening brow o'ercaft.  
 E'en now I learnt, a few short moments o'er,  
 That Britain's age-worn king will feel no more  
 The woes of life. To Lancelot alone,  
 These mournful tidings, and thyself are known.  
 He wills thee to escape by secret flight  
 With Inogen; against the Saxon's might  
 To guard these walls is ours—Tho' distant far  
 Our bravest heroes; not unskilled in war  
 Are we; resolv'd its dire extreme to try  
 (The want of numbers shall despair supply)  
 If not to conquer, yet we know to die."

To the bold youth my grateful thanks I pay;  
 Nor long his counsel in my bosom weigh.  
 Of no avail in war's conflicting rage,  
 Is timorous beauty, and enfeebled age.  
 As now the silent shades of night descend,  
 With Inogen my secret flight I bend,  
 From Carlile's walls; while through the black  
     expanse  
 No glimmering stars appear, nor meteors glance.  
 Our faithful steeds with cautious steps and slow  
 Pass by the tents where slept th' unheeding foe.  
 Their out-posts gain'd, more swift we onward  
     prest  
 And terror's weight hung lighter on our breast.

Thro'

Thro' various toils our calm retreat we found,  
Still, as of old, with nature's blessings crown'd.  
The gurgling rill as softly urg'd its way ;  
The birds as blithly warbled on the spray :  
As sweet the blushing flowers perfum'd the air ;  
The hills as verdant, and the meads as fair.  
But ah ! our minds were chang'd—to them  
no more

These scenes appear'd as in the tranquil hour.  
In murmurs harsh the rill was heard to flow ;  
The feather'd songsters seem'd to mock our woe :  
Each object rose unlovely to the view,  
For all was ting'd with sorrow's sable hue.

It chanc'd, one morn in deep reflection lost,  
I many a hill, and silent valley crost.  
At length the sun gain'd his meridian height,  
And scarce my feeble limbs sustain'd their weight.  
Before my view a gloomy forest rose :  
To quench my thirst, and in its shades repose,  
I thither bent my way ; for thence the sound  
Of waters struck my ear : th' untrodden bound  
I slowly pierce, and now their view obtain,  
As from th' impending cliff they pour'd amain.  
The cooling wave the pangs of thirst allays,  
And round my head the breeze refreshing plays.  
An aged oak beside the torrent stood,  
Of size immense—the monarch of the wood.

O'er

O'er the green dell its boughs were widely thrown,  
And seem'd to make a forest all their own.  
The trees, that round their leafy honors rear'd,  
Like lowly shrubs on barren heaths appear'd  
When mated with its height—in the cool shade  
I lay reclin'd ; a mossy stone my head  
Supported, for around in order placed,  
The lonely spot a rocky circle graced.

As wearied nature yielded to repose,  
A wondrous vision to my mind arose.  
The oak's vast trunk divided, and array'd  
In martial vest, a stately form display'd :  
With radiance ting'd his azure mantle flow'd,  
And in his eyes celestial splendor glow'd.  
On his left arm appear'd a mighty shield,  
Mysterious symbols graced the storied field.  
RELIGION here arose in robes of light,  
There cloud-born ERROR shrunk abash'd in night,  
Here FREEDOM smil'd, dispensing blessings round,  
O'er prostrate tyrants there indignant frown'd.  
Whilst at her feet the main's stern RULER laid  
His trident, and submissive homage paid.  
On the bright helmet, fram'd by art divine,  
FAITH, HONOUR, VIRTUE's sculptur'd figures  
shine ;

And darkly-shadowing, intermix'd beneath,  
The oak and laurel twine their circling wreath.

Forward he came with flow majestic tread,  
And my soul sunk with reverential dread.

“ Favour'd



“ Favour’d of heaven, he cried, dismiss thy fears,  
Behold the GENIUS of thy ISLE appears :  
Nor deem, O sage, with chance thy guide alone,  
My lov’d retreat to thee had e’er been known.  
’Twas thine, directed by the powers above,  
To pierce the precincts of my hallow’d grove.  
Where from the branch, at consecrated hour,  
Sage Druids pluck’d the \* plant of mystic power ;  
And claim’d kind influence from the host of night,  
While the pale crescent, tipt with borrow’d light,  
Sail’d thro’ heaven’s azure vault—their temples  
                    crown’d  
With garlands, oft they traced this rocky round,  
And on their altar rude, yon central stone,  
The milk-white steer expir’d with hollow moan.  
And man himself, a sacrifice abhorr’d,  
Beneath the axe life’s sanguine current pour’d.  
While ruthless priests, in robes of snowy hue,  
From gushing blood, and limbs convulsive, drew

\* The oak was considered as sacred in the earliest ages. The Mistletoe is a plant of the parasite kind, which sometimes, but not frequently, grows on it. In gathering it the Druids used many ridiculous ceremonies, which are described by Pliny in his Natural History, l. xvi. c. 44. He there says, that it was never gathered but on the sixth day of the moon : which was so highly esteemed by them, that all their religious festivals were held on it ; and their months, years, and ages, which consisted of the revolution of thirty years, took their commencement from that day.

Prefaces

Prefages wild and vain :—but now no more  
Their savage rites prevail on Britain's shore.  
And that thy country's fame may brighter shine,  
Heaven calls on thee to aid its great design :  
To guard the generous prince, ordain'd by fate  
To raise the honours of thy sinking state.  
Far to diffuse religion's sacred light ;  
And whelm the Pagan gods in endless night.  
For this the Weird sisters, foes to man,  
Who dimly fate's mysterious volumes scan,  
Have weav'd, with artful malice to impede  
What heaven's eternal wisdom has decreed,  
Round Inogen and Arthur's natal hour  
Spells of dark import, and pernicious power.  
But know, since more than mortal are their foes,  
With more than mortal power shalt thou oppose  
Their arts. Fierce Hengist claims their watch-  
ful care :

To him they destine Britain's matchless fair :  
But be it thine to keep her from his view,  
Or ills on ills, a dreadful train, ensue.  
This sacred wand receive ; exert thy power !  
And at thy will shall rise a lovely bower  
To screen the maid, command her there to stay  
Till war's tempestuous cloud is roll'd away :  
Till from thy lips she hear, and thine alone,  
Fate calls her to partake the British throne.

Then

Then cleave the air to Ligon's desert strand :  
The elements to thy commanding wand  
Shall yield subjection ; and to Britain's heir,  
Still waiting for a faithless foe declare,  
The greatness of his danger : let him haste  
From shore to shore along the watry waste,  
And rouse the martial realms to his allied,  
And knights of other lands by friendship tied.  
But charge him till \* Menevia's bay receive  
Their freighted vessels, ne'er those friends to leave.  
How to instruct, or give, when wanted, aid  
To Britain's prince, shall be to thee convey'd  
In visions of the night.—High heaven his friend,  
With man and dæmons shall the youth contend :  
Thro' danger's sea his bark triumphant guide,  
And scorn the terrors of th' assailing tide.  
But since 'tis man's with liberty of will  
Heaven's kind intents to frustrate or fulfill ;  
With dauntless valour he must prudence join,  
To make him worthy of the great design ;  
Or all his promis'd glory fades away,  
And clouds and darkness veil his opening day !"

He ceas'd ; and sudden as the flame of night,  
The radiant image vanish'd from my sight.

I wake, and wildly gaze around ; my mind  
In wonder lost—the lately lifted rind  
Was closed, and at my feet the mystic wand  
I view'd—I grasp'd it in my trembling hand.

\* Milford Haven.

What strong emotions swell'd my lab'ring breast !  
Awe, gratitude, and joy my soul possess.  
Prostrate on earth my thanks to heaven I paid,  
'Then sought my Inogen. The gentle maid  
In rapture heard ; th' eternal will ador'd,  
Breath'd forth his praise, and future aid implor'd.  
Sweet are the prayers of virtue, and arise  
Like purest incense grateful to the skies.  
And surely her deserts, not mine, could move  
The watchful care of him who rules above.

Ere yet the guardian shades around her clos'd,  
Eager she sued, nor I her suit oppos'd ;  
That Ellena, a maid of noble strain,  
Whose heart fair friendship in its golden chain  
To hers had link'd,—who like ourselves in dread,  
To shun the foe from Carlile's walls had fled  
To Cambria's wilds, within the secret bower  
Might dwell, to sooth the solitary hour.

Now to the lonely isle my rapid flight  
I steer ; the prince and warriors meet my fight.  
To Uther's fate the filial tear he gave,  
'Then stem'd with prosperous gales the yielding  
wave.

From different coasts auxiliar troops he gains ;  
\* Th' Armoric warriors quit their fertile plains,

\* Armorica, now Britany : it is said to have been peopled  
by a colony of the Welsh, under Maximus, a Roman com-  
mander, in the fourth century.



By Hoël led ; and from the \* Neustrian land  
Redoubted Clodion leads his archer band.  
Now by our southern coasts their way they steer,  
Till huge † Bellerium's rugged cliffs appear,  
Our realm's remotest verge ; then distant keep  
From the dark Isles amid the § western deep :  
For there, the billow's whitening surge beneath  
Lurks the dire quicksand, and the rock of death.  
Like a dim cloud amid th' aerial blue,  
† Ierne's Isle now rises to their view.  
'Thro' various regions spread the war's alarms ;  
The friendly chieftains rouse their tribes to arms  
In Arthur's cause ; and soon the generous train  
With shouts resounding plough the watry plain.

Here must I cease ; the dire event you know—  
'The gallant youth whom force could ne'er o'er-  
throw,  
Submits to fraud. Yet hope, faint hope remains—  
But ah ! too long the tedious tale detains  
Your listening ears. Behold, more faintly shines  
Heaven's glittering host, and night's pale lamp  
declines.

\* Normandy.

† The Land's End, so named from Bellerus, a Cornish giant, thrown by Corineus into the sea, from a projecting rock called Michael's Mount.

§ The Scilly Islands.

† Ireland.

Here

Here let us part ; and ere the morning rise,

Ye chiefs, may grateful visions meet our eyes !”

They heard assenting ; sleep’s soft blessings  
crown’d

The tranquil hour, and silence reign’d around.

END OF BOOK SECOND.

A R T H U R;

OR, THE

NORTHERN ENCHANTMENT.

B O O K T H I R D.

## A R G U M E N T.

*MORNING* described. Merlin informs Arthur that, as he had forsaken his friends, he must traverse Britain, if he preferred glory to safety, unattended, and exposed to the wiles and force of men and demons. Arthur accepts the offer with joy. Ivar wishes to accompany him, and deeply regrets his being refused. A magic bark conveys Arthur and Merlin to the northern coast of Britain. Merlin and the bark disappear. Night approaches. Arthur reposes beneath a tree: in the morning awakes, and beholds a suit of enchanted armour, and his favourite horse; proceeds on his way; reads an inscription, proposing to him on the one hand a long and peaceful life if he would retire, on the other danger, without a certainty of happiness, if he succeeded. He prefers the latter: sees a lofty castle at a distance, and meets a shepherd who dissuades him from approaching it; informs him it was erected by magic, and had proved the destruction of many knights; advises him to join the British forces, who had escaped from Carlisle, and were at no great distance, led by Lancelot and Cadw. Arthur, suspecting a fraud, attacks the shepherd, who instantly assumes the form of Urda. She defies him, and Merlin; predicts, that Hengist, who defended the castle, was fated never to fall by the hand of a Briton. Arthur finds the road she advised him to pursue would have led him to ruin; advances to the castle: Hengist appears; combat described. Hengist struck to the ground by Arthur, is conveyed from him in a cloud by Urda. Demons in different hideous forms appear on the battlements, and defy Arthur. The moat and castle appear surrounded with flames; he rushes through them; the enchantment is dissolved, and the castle disappears. The name of Stone-henge derived from it. Arthur rescues two knights, Lionel and Cradoc, from a dungeon into which Hengist had thrown them; their appearance described; are revived by a beverage of supernatural power, which Merlin had given to Arthur. Lionel relates his adventures: his love for Guendolen; his meeting Cradoc in Brigantia; their leading a band of Galician warriors to the assistance of Britain; their attempt (on hearing the prediction, that while the enchanted castle stood Arthur could never repossess his kingdom) to overthrow Hengist; and the cruel usage they experienced from him. Arthur and the knights proceed to a castle at some distance, which proves to be Ebrank's the father of Guendolen. They stay there the following day, then Arthur pursues his way towards Cambria, and directs Lionel and Cradoc to join the Galician forces.



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# A R T H U R ;

OR, THE

NORTHERN ENCHANTMENT.

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## B O O K T H I R D.

FAINT streaks of light the purpled east illumine,  
And westward rolls the flow decreasing gloom.  
With various screams around Conagra's height  
The birds of ocean urge their eddying flight.  
Some o'er th' unruffled main disporting sweep  
On outstretch'd wings, some mid the briny deep  
With pinions clos'd fall headlong; and convey  
Exulting to their young the scaly prey.  
Soon brighter beams, as o'er the hills is borne  
The vapour dim, its curling fides adorn  
With golden tints: mean while th' enlivening gale  
With shadowy waves o'ercasts the grassy vale:  
And the rill bursting from the rocky height  
Winds thro' the narrow dell in floating light.

Besides

Beside its bank, where droops the willow green,  
The stately form of Uther's son is seen.  
Oftimes he plunges mid the liquid stream  
His pointed lance ; the parted waters gleam  
On either side. But ah ! tho' there his eyes  
Are fix'd, his mind to different objects flies,  
His mind, with various scenes of sorrow fraught,  
By memory rack'd, and heart-corroding thought.

His aged friends drew nigh ; and by their side  
The blooming Ivar strode in martial pride.  
The weighty shield, and pointed lance he rear'd,  
And eager valor in his looks appear'd.

The prince, while mingled o'er his visage fly  
Hope's glowing tints, and terror's pallid dye,  
On Merlin gazes. Thus the sage : " Thro' me  
Hear, nor repine at fate's severe decree.  
In ease inglorious long may Arthur live,  
And share those joys a homely state can give.  
But if to nobler views he dare aspire ;  
If his soul glows with valour's quenchless fire ;  
Since idly he forsook his valiant host,  
Alone must he explore his native coast :  
No friend to aid, no menial to attend,  
With man, with dæmons—force and fraud con-  
tend."

" O say not thus, replied Melaschlen's heir,  
A hundred youths shall Arthur's fortune share,  
Eager like me to prove, that Britain boasts  
No braver spirits than Ebuda's coasts.

Fatigue,

Fatigue, thirst, hunger, it is ours to bear;  
Nor unexpert in rudiments of war.

'Tis ours to urge the race, to bend the bow,  
Launch the strong spear, the wrestler's art to  
know;

To climb the rugged rock's tall head; to bound  
From crag to crag, nor heed the sea profound  
That roars below;—in slender barks to brave  
The threatening storm that swells the wintry wave;  
And pierce the whale, when tempesting the main,  
Th' enormous monster spends her rage in vain.

Shall we, who every form of hazard court,  
To whom toils pleasure yield, and dangers sport,  
Oh! say, my sire, shall we refuse the call  
That sounds to battle? can I nobler fall,  
If so fate wills, than on th' ensanguin'd plain  
With mighty Arthur, and his gallant train?  
Or can the skies a greater bliss afford,  
Than thus to share renown with Britain's lord?  
Ere thou hadst number'd Ivar's years, in fight  
Had many a warrior sunk beneath thy might;  
Ere thou hadst number'd Ivar's years, to fame  
Well-known, the living lay preserv'd thy name.  
No fame has Ivar gain'd; but wears away  
To valour's sons unknown, life's rapid day.  
Shall my existence, like the viewless wind,  
Unheeded pass, nor leave a trace behind?  
And thou, a warrior, father, friend, refrain  
The son who, like thyself, would glory gain?

E

He

He ceas'd, and on Melafchlen bent his eyes  
Imploring : nought the hoary king replies.  
'To hear of Ivar's fall were more than death ;  
And more than transport if fame's echoing breath  
Should fill her swelling clarion with his praise—  
But, ah ! to comfort his declining days,  
Ivar alone remain'd ! whilst in his soul,  
Conflicting thoughts and adverse passions roll,  
With gratitude the breast of Arthur glows ;  
His friendly arms the generous youth enclose ;  
And thus he cries : Oh, worthy to obtain,  
With Britain's champions in th' embattled plain,  
Eternal praise ! But no, it can not be,  
Arthur must perish or his country free.  
To him alone the noble choice is given !  
And humbly thus I pay my thanks to heaven !  
Let force with fraud, be fiends with mortals join'd,  
Like roaring streams by feeble mounds confin'd,  
The fearless soul that in my bosom dwells,  
Amid opposing dangers greater swells !"

His perils to partake, his fate to share,  
With fervent prayers Melafchlen's gallant heir  
The prince assail'd in vain. Now interpos'd  
Sage Merlin, and the generous contest clos'd.  
" To thee, brave youth, all gratitude is due  
From Uther's son—no longer vainly sue !  
Britain must groan beneath a foreign power,  
Or these impending ills that round us lower,

By



By his strong arm, and valour be suppress—  
So heaven decrees; then thwart not heaven's behest.  
And lo ! where distant with th' aerial blue  
The billows mingle, faintly to your view  
Gleams a white speck—behold again, and mark  
Light-bounding o'er the waves, a slender bark,  
With power instinct : swift as the winged wind  
It bends its course ! the kindling waves behind  
A radiant track display ; against yon strand  
It strikes, and calls us from your friendly land."

With kindest wishes, and with fervent prayer,  
Melaschlen bids adieu to Britain's heir.  
Not Ivar thus permits him to depart,  
With strong emotions swells his lab'ring heart.  
Speechless he holds him in a strict embrace ;  
The tears fast trickling down his blooming face.  
Denial, ah ! what generous youth can bear,  
Who sues the dangers of a friend to share ?  
While from his view the wish'd occasion flies,  
That just before to his enraptur'd eyes  
Display'd the glittering trophies of renown,  
Bright victory, and fame's unfading crown !

He marks the prince, with Merlin by his side,  
Ascend the vessel : o'er the surging tide  
Again it bounds instinctive ; swift as flies  
Night's gleaming meteor thro' the sable skies.

And now it fades before his anxious view :  
The waste of waters with heaven's concave blue

Skirted, alone appears—He clasps his hands  
 In agony—in mute dejection stands ;  
 And his fix'd eyes, whence flow the frequent tears,  
 Are bent to earth : reluctantly he hears  
 The soft condolance of Ebuda's chief—  
 No words can med'cine to his mind relief.

But now the Muse awakes the vocal shell  
 To themes sublimer—generous youth, farewell !  
 Farewell ye lonely Isles ! where to the skies  
 Enwrapt in tempests towering rocks arise :  
 Where low-hung vapours chill the barren plain,  
 And round you raves th' inhospitable main.  
 Yet soon shall climcs, whom suns more genial  
 crown

With purer lustre, envy your renown.  
 The desert coast, now scarcely known to fame,  
 Shall bear to future times \* Columba's name.

The

\* Columba was the first preacher of Christianity to the Scots in the year 565, about twenty years after the death of Arthur. The remains of several religious edifices, either built by, or dedicated to him, still exist in many of the Western Islands. He founded a monastery and built a church in that of Hy. This little isle, which is but three miles long and one broad, is celebrated by Buchanan for its fertility ; which may naturally be supposed to have originated from a superior degree of cultivation bestowed upon it by its monastic inhabitants, and their dependants. From Columba it derived the name of I-colm-kil, or Iona ; a word that is said to signify a dove in the Hebrew, as Columba does in the Latin language.

The

The fainted sage ! within its hallow'd shore,  
Life's checquer'd dream, its toils, its pleasures o'er,  
The sad recluse his wearied eyes shall close,  
And scepter'd monarchs in its dust repose.

The kings of Scotland ~~and~~ of the Isles embellished it with diverse buildings, the remains of which are still visible. In the old monastery of I-calm-kil, the bishops of the Isles, according to Buchanan, erected their see. Many stately tombs, now defaced by time, or overgrown with weeds, were in his days visible; particularly three of superior eminence, over which little shrines, looking towards the East, were placed. In the west part of each was an inscription; the first signified that beneath it were deposited forty-eight kings of Scotland, the last of whom was Macbeth. Malcolm possibly thought that the usurper's remains defecrated the spot, and decreed that Dumferline should in future be the place of royal sepulture. Eight Norwegian and four Irish kings were interred, according to the inscription, beneath the other tombs. The reason assigned why so many monarchs, chiefs, and prelates, chose this island as their place of burial, is, that they gave credit to an ancient prophecy, which declared, that "seven years before the end of the world, a deluge should drown the nations; the sea at one tide cover Ireland, and the green-headed Ilay; but that the isle of Columba should swim above the flood." Yet, however sacred it might have been deemed by Christian monarchs, we have reason to suppose from Boetius (l. vi. p. 90.) that it was before their time considered as the habitation of the Weird Sisters, and evil spirits. A farther account of this island, the singularity of which has led me into, I hope, no unpardonable digression, may be seen in Pennant's *Tour in Scotland*, vol. iii. p. 241.

Where

Where now the wild weed creeps shall roses bloom,  
The dark-brown dell a verdant tint assume :  
And the rough rock, whose ribs of marble brave  
The loud-resounding storm, the dashing wave ;  
Shall then submit to man's successful toil,  
And rise a taper spire, or massy pile.

Whilst nature thus laborious art subdues,  
A task more arduous still the Saint pursues.  
He tames the savage mind ; he bids the fire  
Of pure religion pagan breasts inspire :  
And Sion's sacred songs burst from the Celtic lyre. }

The rapid vessel urg'd its destin'd way,  
And opening rocks disclos'd \* Ituna's bay.  
Sudden, as Arthur touch'd the shore, from view,  
In darkness wrapt, the bark and sage withdrew,  
Silence and solitude the land o'ercast ;  
Save when at times arose the lonely blast  
With hollow murmur, and unequal sound ;  
While deepning shade on shade, night clos'd  
around.

Where bounteous nature's couch, the green  
sward spread,  
Beneath a towering beech, he rests his head.  
Sleep o'er his eyelids pours the balmy dew,  
And scenes of glory rise before his view—  
Bright, rapturous scenes of Britain's future fame.  
Amid contending realms the fairest name

\* Eden Mouth, or Solway Frith.



That decks th' historic page—by Merlin's skill  
The vision rose, and heaven's assenting will.

At morn he wakes, and gazing round espied  
A white-plumed \* helmet beaming by his side.

Its

\* In imitation of the old romances, devices and inscriptions are sometimes feigned for the heroes' shields, but no appropriated names are given to their weapons, to avoid the ideas of burlesque, which such a passage would naturally excite. The custom, however, prevailed among the real, as well as the ideal heroes of antiquity. It extended into Asia, and the scymetar of the Caliph Harun Al Rashid, the contemporary and rival of Charlemagne, both in historical and fabulous renown, was known by the name of *Sam-samah*. *Luno*, the sword of Fingal, whose reputation vibrates between the two, was distinguished by the name of the Scandinavian armourer who made it; as, in all probability, was the general case. A skilful smith in the heroic ages must have been a person of no little consequence; and it is not unlikely that Vulcan might have owed his seat among the gods of Greece to his skill in that respect. An ancient † *Saga* records the name of four Fairies, or Genii, who, for that reason, obtained a seat near Odin, in Asgard, or the city of the gods. The crest of Arthur, according to romantic history, was a dragon; and on his shield, called *Pridwen*, the image of the Virgin Mary is said to have been engraven. Poetical romance, however, (in general, I believe) represents it as framed of diamond, or adamant; and our old heralds have differed from both, and exhibited it as of a dark azure colour, ornamented with regal crowns. “*Arthuro olim invictissimo,*

† Bart. Antiq. Dan. l. ii. c. 13.

Its crest, a dragon, dreadful to behold—  
 His verdant scales were streak'd with gleams of  
     gold,  
 His teeth he seem'd to grind in threatening ire,  
 And his red eyes to glow with living fire.  
 The vant-brass, cuisses, greaves bestrew'd the  
     field,  
 The keen-edged sword, the adamantine shield,  
 And argent breast-plate, that, with golden nails  
 Compacted, glitter'd like the Dolphin's scales,  
 When from the wave he bounds in wanton pride,  
 And scatters radiance from his dewy side.  
 Such arms he wore, but of inferior frame,  
 When distant India trembled at his name.  
 Nor long he gazes on the gift divine :  
 His mighty limbs encas'd in armour shine.  
 Prepar'd, resolv'd on highest acts, he hears  
 The neighing courser : suddenly appears  
 The steed, that oft his lord triumphant bore  
 Thro' steel-clad ranks, and fields embath'd in gore.  
 With dumb, expressive joy behold him stand ;  
 And while the hero, grasping in his hand

tissimo, quod regna plurima Britannico subegisset, clypeum  
 crearunt *cyaneum* subactorum regum coronis (ut in perpetuum  
 triumphum ducerentur) præfulgentem." (Spelman's *Aspilologia*, p. 41.) The name of *Ron* was given to his spear, and  
 that of *Caliburn* to his sword; taken, according to Radulph  
 Dicetus, from a stream of that name which gave a finer edge  
 to steel if dipt into it.

The

The flowing mane, his wonted seat ascends,  
In conscious pride the deep-arch'd neck he bends.

The prince, for so his guardian sage decreed,  
T'ward Cambria's heights directs the rapid speed.  
O'er hill, o'er dale, and solitary wild,  
Where late the cultur'd scenes of nature smil'd,  
Now ravag'd by the Saxon race, pursues  
His mournful way : with eyes indignant views  
His native realm by ruthless foes oppress'd,  
And keen reflection stings his tortur'd breast.

A wood now stretch'd before his view, array'd  
In leafy pomp, and cast a twilight shade  
O'er the chill plain : nor finds the warrior room  
To urge his courser thro' the forest-gloom.  
Rude brambles crept the stately trees beneath,  
And hung their trunks with many a shapeless  
wreath.

A marble pillar, as he onward drew,  
Appear'd, of height immense and fable hue ;  
And near its base, the prince amaz'd survey'd  
These words in golden characters display'd :  
“ If mindless of th' advice by Merlin given,  
Or doubtful of the wise decrees of heaven ;  
If any fear checks valour's mounting fire,  
While time can safety grant, in peace retire :  
For not tho' prudence guide, tho' conquest crown  
Thy arms, art thou secure from fortune's frown.

The

The choice maturely in thy bosom weigh.  
If conscious worth inspires thy soul, obey  
Its high behest; and on thy breast engrave  
This last advice—*Be circumspect, be brave!*”

Th’ inscription thrice the fearless hero read,  
Then mark’d, where to the right a pathway led  
Athwart the dusky grove: thro’ that pursu’d  
His course; at length an opening lawn he view’d,  
Where tending on his flock a shepherd swain  
Was pacing slowly o’er the grassy plain.  
At distance, on a lofty mountain crown’d  
With spires, with battlements, and turrets round,  
A stately dome arose before his view,  
And o’er the vale its wide-stretch’d shadow threw.

The prince of Britain urg’d his course amain,  
Not unobserv’d: with trembling haste the swain  
Approach’d to meet him; and with visage wan,  
In fault’ring accents wildly thus began:  
“ Oh thou! whose radiant arms, whose martial  
mien,

Proclaim thee fam’d in many a deathful scene;  
Perchance, and sure my simple guess is right,  
A friend to Arthur’s cause—a British knight.  
Stay, I adjure thee, stay! whilst I declare  
A tale, that will with horror strike thine ear.  
On this green valley long my flocks I’ve fed;  
In yonder forest is my lonely shed.

There



There liv'd in careless ease, for never yet  
The din of war had pierc'd my still retreat.  
Three moons are past since, rising with the dawn,  
Such is my constant wont, athwart the lawn  
I drove my flock besprent with morning dew—  
When, as from yonder height the mist withdrew,  
Erewhile a craggy mountain blake and bare,  
Yon stately towers began to swell in air.  
Amid the thunder's voice, and dæmon's yells  
They rose—such wondrous force have magic  
                  spells !

Strange characters, and seals of mystic power,  
Are hung on every gate, and beetling tower,  
That all attempts of force, or art defy :  
Who dares approach, advances but to die.  
Full many gallant knights I've warn'd before ;  
They went—but met these anxious eyes no more !  
Then urge not thou a trial rash and vain—  
Fame calls the valiant to the lifted plain.  
Beyond this dell behold a mountain towers  
Far-distant to the right. The British powers,  
Those who erewhile from Saxon fury fled,  
Are there—by Lancelot and Cador led.  
No braver knights, the prince except, are known,  
Whose fame wide-blazon'd thro' the world is  
                  blown :

Their foremost wish to meet that hero's fight ;  
Their next to labour in the bloody fight.

Haste,

Haste, and partake their victory and fame !  
Yon path to glory leads, but this to death and  
shame.

“ Peasant, I never fly ! he stern returns,  
This breast, when terror chills the dastard, burns  
With double fire.” Then deeply mused a while,  
And fiercer thus began : “ Some secret guile  
Lurks in thy words—no peasant would aspire  
The nature of yon magic dome t’ enquire.  
No British swain, those hostile ramparts near,  
Would thus presumptuous tend his fleecy care.  
No friend would warn me from a glorious deed,  
As righteous vengeance prompts, let falsehood  
bleed !”

He said, and whirl’d aloft the gleaming blade ;  
Swiftly it winds thro’ unresisting shade.  
Smote by the fervent ray, as morning dew  
Dissolves, the peasant vanish’d from his view ;  
And backward leapt the steed in wild affright,  
As Urda stood confest : like sable night  
Her bent brows lower’d ; in wrath she roll’d her  
eyes

That shot pernicious beams : terrific cries  
(Like famish’d wolves contending o’er the slain,  
Or wintry blasts that howl along the main,)  
Burst from her venom’d mouth : “ Weak man,  
forbear !

As well may’st thou inflict on empty air

The

The threatned wound : thy prowess I deride,  
And Merlin's art defy—with death thy guide,  
'To yon enchanted dome, vain reptile go—  
A mortal hand shall lay thy glory low,  
A mortal like thyself—We too have charms  
To shield our champions mid the flock of arms.  
My Hengist ne'er, the thunderbolt of war,  
Shall from a British arm receive a scar.  
'Tis fix'd as fate ! I caught his favouring hour,  
And stamp'd him free from thine and Merlin's  
power !”

She ceas'd, and sudden vanish'd from his eyes ;  
The roaring whirlwind snatch'd her thro' the skies.  
And now the smiling vale, the level way,  
That late so tempting in the prospect lay,  
Resum'd its native horrors ; and display'd  
A hideous chasm beneath the gloomy shade  
Of rocks o'er-arching ; headlong from their height  
Had Arthur fall'n, the shades of endless night  
His eyes had clos'd : to heaven he first address'd  
A grateful prayer, then t'ward the castle prest  
His rapid steed : the summit gain'd, he found  
A spacious moat the rugged walls surround ;  
Save, where a bridge to the huge portal led,  
On which inscrib'd those characters he read.  
“ Long as this dome shall o'er the mountain tower,  
Must Britain bow beneath the Saxon power.”

“ Sink then ye gloomy turrets, Arthur cries,  
And Britain's glory on your ruins rise !”

A horn

A horn that hung beneath he seiz'd, and blew  
 A dreadful note : then o'er the bridge withdrew,  
 To meet whatever foe should tempt his might,  
 Before the walls in bold and open fight.

Dread silence reigns awhile ; then backward  
 bound

The brazen gates with harsh and jarring sound,  
 And wide unfolded to his view display'd  
 Hengist's dread form in fable mail array'd.  
 A \* raven sculptur'd on his helmet flood,  
 With fiery eyes, and beak distain'd with blood.

Omen

\* The superstitious reverence in which this bird has been held by nations, in language, manners, and situation widely different, is somewhat remarkable. The celebrated Spanish reviver of knight-errantry, to whom the hero of this poem was not unknown, informs Sancho, that " he was changed into a raven by enchantment, which the Britons expect will some day or other be dissolved, when he will return and repossess his kingdom ; on which account no one in that country will kill a raven." The British bards, however, suppose, that after the battle of Camlan, in which Mordred was slain, and Arthur grievously wounded, a Fairy conveyed his body to Glastonbury to be cured ; whence he was in process of time to return, and be restored to his former regal authority. Of his body's having been really found there, in Henry the Second's time, we have the testimony of Giraldus Cambrensis, who affirms that he saw his bones in an oaken coffin, which contained a leaden cross with this inscription :

" Hic jacet sepultus inclitus rex Arturius in insula Avalonia."

Radul-



Omen of death and havock : his huge shield  
 Was black, but studs of gold emblaz'd the field.  
 (Heaven's

Radulphus Dicetus, in his History of the British Kings, says ; " Quia Britannica historia de ejus morte nil certum tradidit, Britones adhuc eum vivere delirant." Fordun, likewise, in his History of Scotland, mentions his having heard the same report, and that the following inscription was placed on his tomb ;

' Hic jacet Arturus rex quondam, *rexque futurus.*"

In Selden's Illustrations on the third Book of Drayton's Poly-olbion, a translation is given of a passage in Taliesin (Arthur's cotemporary) to the same purpose. Lydgate, according to the fictions of the Welsh bards, declares ;

" *He is a king crowned in Faerie,  
 With sceptre and sword, and with his royally  
 Shall resort as lord and sovereigne  
 Out of Faerie, and reigne in Brytaine.*"

Milton, I suppose, must allude to this strange legend, where he says, though I know not with what authority as to the geographical situation of the land of Faerie,

" *Arthurumque etiam sub terris bella moventem.*"

The credulity of the old Britons in this respect was at last so much the object of ridicule among other nations, that it became proverbial.

Quibus si credideris  
 Expectare poteris  
 Arturum cum Britonibus.

In regard to the ideas, therefore, of Arthur's reviving, and repossessing his throne, the knight appears to have had sufficient historical evidence in his peculiar line ; but it is not so easy to ascertain whence he derived the intelligence of his  
 having

(Heaven's pendant spangles thus with mingled  
light

Adorn th' expanded canopy of night.)

And the bright bos appear'd a splendid sun ;

The proud device—"unequall'd and alone."

having been metamorphosed into a raven. Certain, however, it is, to whatever cause we may ascribe it, that our country people in most parts of England scrupulously abstain from killing that bird. It has been conjectured that they are looked on with some degree of religious respect on account of their feeding Elisha at the brook Cherith. But the Greeks and Romans, before they knew such a kingdom as Judæa existed, or Christianity had acquired any establishment in the world, regarded them with superstitious reverence. They are said likewise to have been worshipped in ancient Egypt, and to possess as an hieroglyphic a predictive virtue. The Arabians, according to Porphyry, entertained the same opinion concerning them. But as we have no account of their being considered as ominous, or sacred by the Druids, we may presume that the reverence in which the vulgar now hold them, is derived from our Gothic ancestors. It is well known that the Danes attributed many marvellous qualities, to their standard *reafan*. The Swedes, Mr. Pennant informs us, and possibly the other northern nations, now pay a superstitious kind of respect to this bird, which was considered by their ancestors as peculiarly sacred to \* Odin ; who is styled in the † Edda, "*corvorum deus*." Many strange customs prevail in all nations, long after the reasons cease to be known, on which they were founded. The investigation of any of them may gratify curiosity, and be considered, it is presumed, as a blameless, though not a very important pursuit.

\* Bart. D. A. l. ii. c. 8. 2.

† Hist. 20.

Vast

Vast as the pine on Norway's storm-beat shore,  
By lightning blasted, was the lance he bore.  
High mounted on a coal-black steed he rode,  
And the bridge shook beneath the mighty load.

Athwart the field, confiding in their force,  
The champions urge their loud-resounding course.  
Thus clouds dark-gathering o'er the blue serene,  
The thunder lurking in their womb unseen,  
Meet with dire crash, and shake th' ethereal plain.  
The dreadful shock unable to sustain,  
In dust the couriers roll—the knights arise;  
Rage swells their souls, and sparkles in their eyes,  
They quit their spears; and whirl'd with sudden  
    fway,

Their swords a ring of dazzling light display;  
While from the mail at every mighty stroke  
Flash'd radiance. Thus at length indignant spoke  
The British hero? "Thank thy guardian fiends!  
Thy safety on their tender care depends:  
Or sunk beneath that blow thy crest of pride  
Had swept the dust!"—"Vain boaster! he replied,  
Thy feeble arm, thy threatnings I despise;  
And thus thy boyish arrogance chastise!"

Again in vain the contest they renew,  
While from their toilworn limbs the briny dew  
In streams descends—at length the British knight,  
On Hengist's shield, collecting all his might,

F

So

So fiercely smote, that with a sudden bound  
His falchion backward flew, and prest the ground.  
Hengist unhurt sustain'd the mighty shock :—  
A feebler blow had riv'd a marble rock.  
Yet his numb'd arm its wondrous power confess'd;  
The buckler fell loud-echoing ; at his breast  
With fiercest vengeance burnt, on every side  
With strokes redoubled swift his foe he plied :  
Who vainly strove, whilst the loud storm his shield  
Repell'd, to snatch his falchion from the field.  
But ah ! not aught could sword or spear avail  
'Gainst Hengist girded in impassive mail.  
Then firmly grasp'd in either hand he held  
'The moon-like targe ; and swinging round im-  
pell'd

Its ponderous weight against the Saxon's head :  
Senseless on earth his dreadful foe was laid ;  
Vanquish'd, not slain. Tho' mighty was the blow,  
Another's arm must lay the hero low,  
To rise no more ! for when the British lord  
With dire intent resum'd his flaming sword,  
Thick vapours roll'd around of fable hue,  
While Urda snatch'd the warrior from his view.  
“ Is this the vaunted knight, enraged he cries,  
Who Merlin's skill, and Arthur's force defies ?  
'Thus basely rescued from my conquering sword  
By hell's unhallow'd agents ! race abhorr'd ;

A mightier



A mightier champion for your cause prepare,  
Or soon yon lofty towers dissolve in air !”

“ Long, Arthur, long these towers shall brave the  
sky !”

Ten thousand voices suddenly reply,  
Loud screaming from the rampart’s height ; a-  
maz’d,

Not terrified, the hero upward gaz’d ;  
And saw th’ extended walls, the turrets crown’d  
With hideous objects : wheeling wide around,  
The screeching owl, the raven of the night,  
With notes ill-omen’d urge their crowded flight.  
Harpies obscene their direful forms unfold ;  
And Dragons, arm’d in scales of burnish’d gold,  
Beat the resounding air with out-stretch’d wings,  
Like rushing forms, and shake their pointed  
stings.

Sulphureous torrents roll the moat around  
In liquid flame ; the boiling waves resound,  
And lash the rugged walls : before his eyes  
The bridge, the portal fades : black vapours rise,  
And fiery flakes shoot thro’ the dusky skies. }

Infernal spirits on the walls appear,  
Here the sword blazes, there the threatening spear,  
Here, like a meteor, levelled at his heart,  
Gleams on the bending string the flame-tip’d dart.  
From each red eye-ball glanc’d the sparks of ire ;  
Each dismal front seem’d scath’d with livid fire :

With wrath o'ercaft, and horror's blackeft hue ;  
While wreathing on the winds their fnaky trefles  
flew.

Unmov'd, what mortal could fustain the fight  
Of fpectres fwarming from the realms of night !  
Yet no difmay the hero's looks exprefst,  
As thus in fecret he his foul addrefst :

“ Say, I by flight fhould shameful life fecure,  
Can Britain's heir a life with fhame endure ?  
Dread power ! if vainly I implore thine aid,  
Extend protection to my lovely maid.  
My fate to thee fubmiffive I refign ;  
If not to live, to fall with fame be mine !”

He faid ; his weighty lance refum'd, and held  
Outftretch'd before his front the concave fhield ;  
Then hurling bold defiance, with a bound  
O'er-leapt the moat, and touch'd unharm'd the  
ground—

A glad furprize ! black clouds involv'd the fky :  
Repeated peals of thunder roll'd on high :  
The magic vifion, all th' embattled powers  
Of fiends, the burning lake, the frowning towers,  
Are vanifh'd ; as the troublous dreams of night  
Disperfe before the morning's rofeate light.

Deftructive time with unrefifted fway,  
Mankind, and all their labours, fweeps away ;  
Exalts the valley, finks the mountain low,  
And bids the rapid torrent ceafe to flow :

Thro'

'Thro' him where once enchanted structures grac'd  
The cloud-top'd hill, now glooms a lonely waste.  
Yet still, memorial of their scite, remain  
The circling stones that rise on Sarum's plain.  
'The wondrous rocks by power of magic laid  
To form its deep foundation, undecay'd  
By him who all consumes, are known to fame,  
And still retain the mighty † Hengist's name.

Beneath a rock an iron gate appears ;  
Within faint sounds of deep distress he hears.  
He shakes the massy bars ; the bars give way,  
And thro' the dungeon streams unwonted day.  
Forward the dauntless knight advanc'd, and found  
Two hapless warriors fasten'd to the ground  
By massy chains ; with weak and struggling breath  
They cried : "To freedom, or a welcome death  
Consign your wretched thralls ! a noble foe  
Would scorn to aggravate the captive's woe."

Their voices well the British hero knew,  
And in his eyes swell'd pity's pearly dew.  
Their chains unbound, he led them t'ward the  
light.

But ah ! what horrid objects met his sight !  
Their hair, like elf-locks, round their shoulders  
clung :

Each limb was weaken'd, every nerve unstrung.

† Stone-henge.

Pale,

Pale, meagre famine fate in either face—  
 Extinct the manly form, and martial grace.  
 In hollow sockets dimly roll'd their eyes ;  
 Their lab'ring bosoms heav'd with frequent sighs.  
 With staggering steps they totter o'er the ground,  
 And gain at length their prison's utmost bound ;  
 Then drooping on the verdant turf, inhale  
 The long-lost sweetness of the freshning gale.

The prince, sage Merlin's gift, a viol bore  
 Of juice heaven-temper'd, potent to restore  
 Th' exhausted frame, and drooping soul to cheer,  
 Opprest by famine's rage, or toils severe.  
 A grateful boon ! as quickly he applied  
 To each the friendly draught, life's ruddy tide  
 Again flow'd swiftly in its wonted course.  
 Reviving spirits, and returning force,  
 Each hero felt ; and as with glad surprize  
 On their lov'd prince they bent their eager eyes ;  
 From the green turf with sudden bound they  
 sprung,

Now clasp'd his knees, now to his bosom clung.

“ And is it given us thus to meet our lord,  
 Restor'd to freedom—by his arm restor'd ! ”—

While \* Lionel and Cradoc thus express'd  
 The strong emotions of th' enraptur'd breast ;

The

\* Lionel was brother to Lancelot, according to our early romances : an exploit of the latter is recorded in an old ballad



The kind embrace their royal friend returns,  
And mutual transport in his bosom burns.

Subsided now the tumult of delight,  
Thus Lionel to Britain's princely knight  
Recounts his fortunes : " Ere thy fire resign'd  
'To fate's resistless doom, my active mind,  
'Tired of the tasteless joys that fortune showers  
On courtly knights in halls and festive bowers,  
Impell'd me, distant from my native home,  
In quest of fame thro' foreign lands to roam.  
My usual arms forsaken, I assum'd  
Mail ting'd with verdant dye, the helmet plam'd  
With laurel wreaths ; depictur'd on the shield,  
Spring's early flowers that deck the grassy field,  
Round her bright form in opening bloom appear.  
" Earnest of joys to crown the coming year"—  
The words impress. In honour of thy love,  
Fair Guendolen ! I vow'd my might to prove :  
And the decreed in lone sequester'd bowers  
'To wear away the solitary hours,  
'Till crown'd with fame, and worthy of her charms,  
Revolving time should give me to her arms.

ballad in Percy's Collection, vol. i. p. 198. taken from Morte  
Arthur. This story Mr. Whitaker, in his History of Man-  
chester, has endeavoured to reconcile to history. Cradoc is  
the hero in an excellent old ballad, taken partly from the  
same romance, in the third volume of Percy's Collection of  
Ancient Poetry, p. 3.

Bootless



Th' uplifted falchion from my hand I threw,  
And suddenly to his embraces flew.

“ 'Tis ours in acts of friendship to contest,  
I cried, let others try who combats best.”

Cradoc, who to Brigantia's turrets came,  
By martial feats to win the palm of fame,  
Felt equal joy. Galicia's king who spied  
Our kindling rage thus suddenly subside,  
Bade us approach, and when he found the cause  
Was sacred friendship, crown'd us with applause;  
And by his side, with highest honours graced,  
Thy knights, as judges of the Tourney, placed.

On the last morn we to the king applied,  
Nor our request the generous king denied,  
To meet, in honour of our native land,  
Whatever champions dared our force withstand.  
Success our challenge crown'd; rewards and praise  
The monarch gave: the minstrels lofty lays  
Proclaim'd our fame: nor long in joy we past  
The circling hours—a sudden gloom o'ercast  
The pleasing scene. We heard of Britain's woes,  
And rage, and pity in our bosom rose.  
The king our grief partakes; and Arthur's cause,  
A crowd of heroes to our standard draws.  
Trifanton's \* bay receives our gallant host;  
Nor deem we there to find a hostile coast.

\* South Hampton.

But soon a Saxon band, by Ulfin led,  
Our march oppose : and now our warriors bled,  
And now the foe : when, by the trump of Fame  
Resounded, to our ears these tidings came ;  
That hell-born dæmons leagued with Britain's foes,  
And by their charms a magic castle rose,  
Where Hengist dwelt in solitary state,  
Mock'd human force, and braved the power of  
fate :

Convinc'd, that while it stood, so ran the tale,  
His fame would flourish, and his arms prevail.

T' atchieve a noble act my soul aspires,  
And Cradoc's bosom glows with kindred fires.  
We meet the champion, but we strive in vain.  
In such a contest thou alone could'st gain  
Success.—Our mighty, but ungenerous foe,  
Within yon gloomy cavern plung'd us low.  
Dank was the floor; our limbs strong fetters bound,  
And toads and loathsome reptiles crawl'd around.

“ Here meet your doom ! the furious Hengist  
cried—

Here pay the forfeit of presumptuous pride !”  
When the gate clos'd, and the last struggling ray  
Of light was vanish'd ; when we heard the key  
Turn on the grating ward, what wild despair  
Possess'd our souls ? we wildly rave, our hair,  
Our flesh we strive to rend ; our chains deny  
Th' attempt : then still in silent grief we lie ;

Willing



Wishing that fate our heavy eyes would close,  
And weight of sorrows sink us to repose.  
Repose, not such alas ! our souls desir'd,  
We find, with strong conflicting passions tir'd,  
Sleep seals our eyes: but ah ! tho' seal'd our eyes,  
Terrific objects to our sight arise:  
Th' unquiet mind's perturbed brood : a train  
Of nameless horror, and chimæras vain !

We wake, and rage again our bosom rends,  
And frenzy reigns ; but soon the tear descends  
In silent anguish. Tho' our wish was death,  
Yet nature taught us to prolong our breath,  
E'en in our own despite : but nought t' assuage  
Thirst's burning pangs we found, and hunger's  
rage,

Save noisome weeds, nurs'd by a scanty tide,  
Out-welling from the cavern's rocky side,  
'That lav'd the muddy soil—thus, many a day,  
Tho' time we mark'd not, in despair we lay ;  
And surely, but for thy protecting might,  
A few short hours in everlasting night  
Had clos'd our eyes. May ne'er my deadliest foe  
Such horrors feel—such bitterness of woe !

But quit we now, O prince ! this hated place,  
Dire witness of our sorrow and disgrace.  
Not distant far, encircled by a wood,  
From a steep hill its secret scite I view'd,

A castle

A castle stands : if there a Briton dwells,  
His friendship grants, if not, our force compells  
Needful reception—soon we'll lead again,  
If such thy will, our warriors to the plain :  
On the proud foe redeem our honour lost,  
And take due vengeance on the Saxon host."

The prince assents : on Hengist's fiery steed  
The warriors mount, and to the castle lead.  
Onward they press, and with the closing light,  
Embower'd in shades, it dimly rose to fight.

The castle's lord was Ebrank ; once renown'd  
For martial acts ; and ever-faithful found  
To Arthur's fire : but now, his vigour fled,  
A peaceful life in solitude he led ;  
And on the realm his arm could serve no more,  
His daily prayers perpetual bliss implore.  
There, Guendolen, his daughter, constant maid,  
No less by plighted vows than duty sway'd,  
Sequester'd dwelt : till to the lonely dome  
With well-earn'd glory crown'd her hero come,  
To claim her promise : of his fame she hears,  
And nigh approach—no Lionel appears,  
Tho' she had sent his glad return to greet,  
And Ebrank call'd him to their still retreat,  
Yet meanly of her knight she nought surmiz'd,  
Himself she lov'd, but more his honour priz'd :

And

And blest the youth who check'd love's pleasing  
flame,

When foes defied him to the field of fame.

Alas ! imprison'd in the cavern drear,

No tidings of the maid e'er reach'd his ear.

As with her father on the turret's height  
She stands, th' approaching warriors meet their  
fight.

Thro' rising mists as shoot heaven's struggling  
beams,

Thro' eve's dun shades the mail of Arthur gleams.

The Warder rings th' alarm : the hoary chief

His bosom smote, and thus express his grief.

“The long-expected hour of fate is near,  
And death awaits us from the Saxon spear.  
Were that the worst, I'd gladly meet my doom :  
Too long I've liv'd—too long the greedy tomb  
Defrauded !—but alas ! to ruffian's rage  
To yield my child—the comfort of my age—  
That thought embitters death ! yet still I trust,  
This arm, that many a foe has stretch'd in dust,  
Some portion of its former strength retains ;  
And valor's stream, that whilom swell'd my veins,  
Forgets not yet to flow—my arms prepare ;  
The rust-worn shield, the long forsaken spear,  
'Tis ours at least the fate of war to try,  
And shew them how a Briton dares to die.”

“ Vanish

“ Vanish that thought ! replied the blooming  
maid,

Tho’ to these eyes unknown, the chief array’d  
In gorgeous arms ; yet sure the foremost knight,  
On yonder sable steed that meets our fight,  
Is Lionel. In haste, my fire, descend,  
And hail with words of joy our gallant friend !”

Thro’ the wide portal hoary Ebrank prest,  
And courteous welcom’d either valiant guest.  
Soon with redoubled joy his bosom swell’d,  
When the bright helm unloosen’d, he beheld  
His much lov’d prince—low bending on his knees,  
His trembling hands the willing hero’s seize,  
And mixing sobs with words, he cries ; “ Kind  
heaven

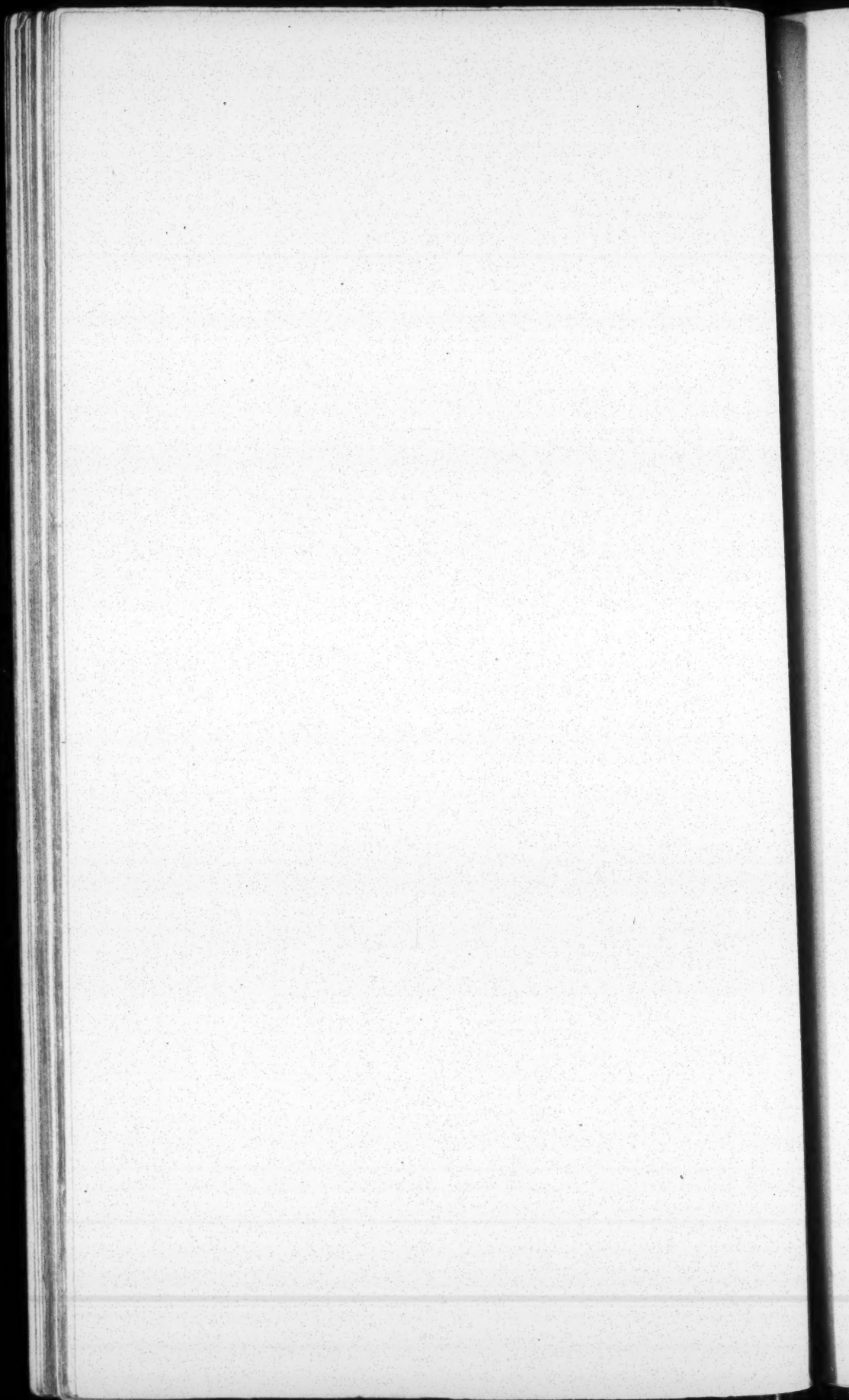
To me enough of worldly bliss has given :  
The valiant youth predestin’d to renew  
His country’s fame beneath my roof to view !”

But ah, how weak are words these joys to tell  
That in the lover’s breast to rapture swell,  
When those by unexpected chance appear,  
For whom they live, who only life endear ?  
Such sweet affection, whose pure flames inspire  
Mutual delight, unmix’d with wild desire,  
The faithful knight, and blooming maiden own,  
By perils past, and absence stronger grown.  
Whilst hoary Ebrank on the plenteous feast  
Questions the fortunes of his princely guest,  
Their



Their meeting looks, true heralds of the heart,  
The soft emotions of the mind impart.  
For love, thy language want of words supplies,  
Speaks to the soul, and reasons to the eyes.

The generous prince with sympathetic breast  
Partook their joy : yet still himself unblest  
He deem'd, unconscious of his fair one's state,  
And dubious of the dark decrees of fate.  
The coming day fore-wearied thro' the fight  
Sustain'd so lately, to renew his might  
With Ebrank he abode : but when the ray  
Of morn again dispers'd the vapors grey ;  
To the fair maiden, and his aged friend,  
He bids adieu—the knights his course attend.  
Yet grief foreboding swell'd the virgin's breast,  
And Lionel the secret sigh repress.  
But honour call'd, and Arthur gave command  
To join with Cradoc the Galician band.  
The prince his solitary way pursues,  
To heaven's decrees obedient ; soon he views  
The Cambrian mountains that ascending high,  
Enrapt in clouds seem'd mingled with the sky.



A R T H U R ;

OR, THE

NORTHERN ENCHANTMENT.

B O O K F O U R T H.

G

## A R G U M E N T.

*LANCELOT* described as walking by the sea-side. An account given how he and the Britons escaped from Carlisle, while Hengist was invading Albania. He afterwards, by advice of the weired sisters, defends the magic castle; the overthrow of which is related in the preceding book. The auxiliaries and knights who had accompanied Arthur during his voyage, land in the bay of Menesio. Their general consternation at hearing of his supposed death. At Lancelot's instigation, they unanimously determine to revenge it: their march described. As Valdemar king of Denmark, and the northern chieftains are feasting in Carlisle, Udda, in the form of Odin, appears to them, and exhorts them to act with their usual valour, and march against the enemy who were approaching. Valdemar gives directions to that purport. Hacon, king of Norway, refuses to acknowledge him as his superior. Valdemar relinquishes the claim. A seer advises concord, and predicts that Arthur shall never reign over Britain, unless the bravest heroes of the North should destroy each other by mutual wounds. The march of the Scandinavians described. The British army appears. Hacon advances to attack them: is prevented by Valdemar; who praises the valour of his enemy, and persuades him to wait till the following morning.



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# A R T H U R ;

OR, THE

NORTHERN ENCHANTMENT.

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*B O O K F O U R T H.*

ON the dark cliffs that skirt Menevia's bay,  
What chief pursues his solitary way !  
Bold is his mien ; his wide emblazon'd shield  
Bears the deep marks of many a well-fought field :  
O'er his bright helm high waves the sable crest,  
And anxious care sits on his brow impress !

'Tis † Lancelot—in arms of high renown,  
The brave defender of the British crown ;  
By ruthless foes fore press'd, who unsubdued,  
Thro' Hengist's camp his course of havoc hew'd

† See Book II. The events here narrated, are supposed to have happened during Arthur's voyage to collect succours.

At night's still hour, when his deluded foes  
Were sunk in revelry, or dead repose.

Th' ensuing morn, clouds piled on clouds arise,  
Black in the west; loud-echoing thro' the skies  
Shrieks the wild wind; descends th' impetuous rain,  
And the swoll'n stream foams through the ravag'd  
plain.

A narrow bridge across the current lay;  
O'er that the warriors urge their rapid way,  
Brave Lancelot the last; whilst in the rear  
Borne on their trampling steeds the foes draw near.  
In twain, his heroes aid, the bridge he rends;  
Down the rude stream the floating mass descends:  
Nor dare the foes, so turbulent its course,  
Mid the wild eddies plunge their foaming horse.  
Indignant fury in their bosom reigns;  
The scalding tear of baffled rage distains  
The glowing cheek. Ye rescued warriors! raise  
To heaven the voice of gratitude and praise.  
Had fearful Hengist led the hostile train,  
Opposing torrents would have raged in vain,  
Then had he sunk beneath the whelming tide,  
Or British blood the waves with crimson dyed.

But he, the warriors pent in walls disdain'd.  
New foes he fought, and new renown obtain'd.  
With all his knights, and half the Saxon host,  
He burst in terror on \* Albania's coast.

\* Scotland

Her sons in vain his matchless force withstood ;  
Death mark'd his way, his path was traced in blood.  
Returning now with conquest crown'd, he hears  
Th' unwelcome news, and swift revenge prepares.  
The weird sisters check his swelling ire,  
And bid their champion to the dome retire,  
Which rear'd by magic, fenc'd by potent charms,  
† Could mock, they proudly deem'd, the world  
                  in arms.

By rapid march the Britons render vain  
Their foes pursuit, and Cambria's confines gain.  
Its generous sons their friendly arms assume ;  
On various summits war's collected gloom,  
Like winter's hovering mist, impending lours,  
And threats destruction to the hostile powers.

As thus their watch th' appointed warriors keep,  
Their \* leader hastens t'ward the billowy deep :  
By Merlin warn'd, that thro' the narrow main  
The prince approach'd with his auxiliar train.  
Alas ! not then to Britain's sage was known  
That danger's cloud hung dark o'er Uther's son.

As bends the chief his long-expecting eyes,  
Like scatter'd mists on ocean's verge arise  
The wish'd-for sails ; that soon in swelling pride  
And cloth'd with brightness o'er the billows glide ;

† The overthrow of Hengist, and the enchanted castle, is mentioned in the 3d book.

\* Lancelot.

And anchor'd in Menevia's crouded bay,  
A leafless forest to his view display.

First o'er the strand th' † Armoric leader prest,  
Known by his sun-bright helm, and gorgeous crest,  
The far-fam'd Indian bird; it struck the view  
With eyes of jet, and neck of purple hue,  
While its gay train with gems and gold inlaid,  
A splendid ring of mingled light display'd;  
The high-priz'd gift of Uther's mighty son,  
In combat from a Pagan monarch won;  
Born on the banks where sacred Ganges pours  
O'er gold-besprinkled sands his lucid stores.  
Where ripen'd by the genial blaze of day  
Rich gems their emulative beams display.  
Where musky sweets from flower-deck'd groves  
exhale;

And double harvests load the fertile vale.

Known was the Briton by his silver shield:  
A callow eagle sculptur'd on the field,  
To hope's bright image bent his eager eyes,  
Who rear'd her arm aloft, and pointed to the skies.  
The heroes, who on Asia's burning soil  
Had mutual dangers shar'd, and mutual toil,  
Meet with that joy the brave alone can know,  
When friendship's beams in kindred bosoms glow;  
Summon'd again the flock of arms to dare,  
And run together glory's bright career.



Next Clodion came; the glittering helm behind,

His crimson plumes flew streaming on the wind.  
As dusky vapours ting'd with sanguine hue  
The glowing comet's rapid course pursue.

Ierne's gallant chiefs, with spurs of speed,  
Maronan, Conal, Adamar succeed.

Fiacha next, who ruled th' \* Emanian land,  
Himself a host, precedes his martial band.

Beneath his shaggy brow his eye-balls glare,  
Redundant waves around his sable hair.

Nor lance he wields, nor bounding steed bestrides,  
But in his matchless strength, his iron mace  
confides.

Last, slowly-moving o'er the strand appears  
(Sad, silent, trailing their inverted spears)  
The knightly train, who long from shore to shore  
Had rang'd with Britain's prince thro' ocean's  
roar.

Who, till he plung'd beneath the whelming tide,  
Had mock'd at woe, and fortune's power defied.

Now grief fate heavy on each manly breast,  
And pale despondence every brow confest.

Like rocks down whose cold sides the waters  
flow,

Th' auxiliar leaders stand in silent woe:

\* Ulster.

But

But grief superior, Lancelot, to feel  
Was thine, and thine thy anguish to conceal.  
For now from troop to troop the tidings ran,  
And frequent thus th' inferior herd began.

“ Bootless in idle wars to waste our blood :  
The hero sunk beneath the whelming flood,  
For whom alone we vow'd our arms to wield,  
And brave the terrors of th' embattled field.  
Fierce is the foe, but open lies the main ;  
For doubtful honour let us safety gain !”

Can cold dismay, thus Britain's knight address  
The warriors, quench the fire in valour's breast !  
Leaders of battle ! low the mighty lies,  
But blood, not tears, must grace his obsequies.  
Like wave on wave impell'd in yonder bay,  
The race of man successive rolls away :  
Unnoted pass the feeble, but the brave  
Survive to glory, and defy the grave.  
If such was Arthur, such your generous aim,  
Avenge him, warriors ;—emulate his fame !  
But if thro' terror vain those tears are shed,  
Disgraceful to yourselves, and of the dead  
Unworthy :—know, tho' you your aid deny,  
The sons of Britain shall the combat try.  
Their country's wrongs, their Arthur's sacred  
shade,

Will nerve each arm, and edge th' avenging blade.

And

And when our death, or conquest reach your ear,  
For only death, or conquest now is dear,  
Then, warriors, touch'd with generous shame too  
late,

Our fame you'll envy, or lament our fate."

" Your fate to mourn, or at your fame repine,  
Th' Armorick king return'd; be never mine!  
Not more to Lancelot, than Hoel dear,  
Was Uther's son—with thee I lift the spear:  
Resolv'd alike in glory's path to tread;  
Resolv'd to perish, or avenge the dead."

With brow contracted stern Fiacha cries,  
" Thou wrong'st us, Briton, by the vain surmise.  
Sooner the feeble arm of man shall tear  
Yon self-suspended lamp that fires the air  
From his ethereal arch, than fears controul  
Our mind, or change the purport of our soul.  
\* And sure we trust, that spark of heavenly flame  
Shall quickly animate a nobler frame.  
Till, by degrees from mortal dross refin'd,  
It leaves the body's cumb'rous load behind.  
To conquest lead—or death! our hearts beat high,  
To gain a nearer prospect of the sky."

\* Unum ex iis, quæ Druidæ precipiant, in vulgus effluxit, videlicet ut forent ad bella meliores, æternas esse animas, vitamque alteram ad manes.

Pomponius Mela, Lib. 3. Chap. 2.

Like

Like him, each gallant leader undismay'd,  
On his broad buckler clash'd the glittering blade,  
And loud exclaim'd : " While these our arms can  
wield,

We scorn to shun the dangers of the field."

" Brothers in war, whom honor's bands unite !  
Exulting thus rejoin'd the British knight,

Accept my heartfelt thanks, the grateful praise,  
A glowing bosom to your virtue pays.

Dwells there in all these bands a soul so mean,

That shrinks in terror from th' impending scene ;

Forth let the dastard stand—there lies the main,

And free the way :—shall we his flight restrain ?

In some lone cavern let him hide his shame,

Not share with honor's sons the meed of fame."

His words with loud acclaim the valiant hear ;  
The coward feels not, or conceals his fear.

And now the lofty voice of war resounds

From Sabrina's banks to \* Gwineth's rocky  
bounds.

Whilst the pale mother to her panting breast

The infant clasps, with tender fears oppress'd,

The father calls to arms : from mountains hear,

Dark woods and winding dells the heroes pour.

To guard the craggy summits they disdain ;

The storm of war descends, and echoes thro' the  
plain.

\* North-Wales.



Beneath their steel-clad chiefs in bright array,  
The ranks of battle urge their rapid way.

As when the sun-beams gild th' autumnal sky,  
And blasts inconstant o'er the valley fly,  
With varied light the waving grass is crown'd,  
And quick, successive, splendor floats around.

In Carlile's lofty hall, in festive state,  
The \* Dacian monarch mid his heroes fate.  
In Hengist's absence, such the king's commands,  
Th' appointed leader of the Northern bands.  
Ill-brook'd by Hacon, grown in combats grey,  
Norway's dread lord, beneath whose iron sway  
E'en distant Thule groan'd, and lands unknown  
To fame, that stretch beneath the frigid zone.

Sullen and stern he marks the genial rites;  
The music charms not, nor the feast delights.  
Sweno in silent grief his father view'd,  
A generous youth with milder thoughts endued;  
And lovely as the rosy morn that streams  
Thro' vernal showers its joy-diffusing beams:  
Whose voice when untam'd passions sway'd his  
foul,

Alone could sooth his woes, or rage controul.

The goblet circles; the resounding lyre,  
And lofty strain heroic thoughts inspire.

\* Valdemar.

Some vaunt their high exploits in former wars ;  
Some shew their batter'd shields, and deep-trench'd  
scars :

In brutal riot some the hours employ,  
And all is dissonance, and barbarous joy.

Sudden, dark clouds the rafter'd dome o'ercaft ;  
Upwards they turn their anxious eyes aghast :  
And thro' the quick disparting shades behold  
Dread Odin, seated on his throne of gold.  
Black vapors, such as clothe the wintry night,  
His foot-stool form'd ; a meteor's vivid light  
His brows encircled : radiant arms he wore,  
And shook his flaming lance distain'd with gore.  
Loud as when thunder roars he silence broke—  
'The vast dome trembled as the phantom spoke.

“ Offspring of heroes ! fam'd in fields of fight,  
Who sport in danger, and in death delight,  
Does this become you, sons of battle ! say,  
'To wear in shameful sloth the hours away ?  
Is this a time to feast in bower or hall,  
When foes advancing to the combat call ?  
'The host you deem'd beneath the roaring main  
O'erwhelm'd, defies you to the list'd plain.  
The cloud of war on Cambria's height impends  
No more, but darkly-lowering hither bends.  
Awake, arise, and in your might confide !  
Rush on, and let destruction be your guide !  
Think on your fathers' fame, your own renown,  
My favour, who with joys perpetual crown

The

The chiefs, who boldly in the combat fall,  
And guide their spirits to my lofty hall,

\* O'er-arch'd with golden shields, whose dazzling  
blaze

Exceeds the mid-day sun's unclouded rays.

There

\* The Scandinavian Valhalla, like the Mahometan Paradise, was supposed to have been roofed with shields. The † Valkeries were employed by Odin to choose in battle those who were to perish, and like the Houries to wait on the selected heroes. These "Posters of the sea and land" have been confounded by other writers, as well as Shakspeare, with the northern Parææ or *Definies*: but the latter, according to Scandinavian mythology, had their abode near the great ash Ydrasil in Asgard, or *city of the gods*. Skulda only, the youngest of them, is mentioned in the Edda, as accompanying the Valkeries, when engaged in fulfilling the commands of Odin.

From those beautiful Divinities, so they were once esteemed, who bestrode the "flightless couriers of the air," was most probably derived in subsequent times (with grief be it spoken) the degrading idea of witches riding upon broomsticks. At least, so soon as † Christianity began to prevail, severe edicts were promulgated in different kingdoms against those who travelled through the air in the *night-time*. The belief in such nocturnal flights, scarcely yet exploded among our country people, was the fashionable creed in the days of James the First. Had our aerial navigators started into existence a century or two sooner, they might possibly have exercised that monarch's sagacity how to bring them within the letter of the law.

† Bart. D. A. L. 2. c. II. † Translation of Mallet's N. A. V. 2. p. 101.

A wild

There shall each here share, a welcome guest,  
The foaming goblet, and perpetual feast.

Again

A wild bear, whose flesh was daily renewed, supplied the heroes in Valhalla with food, after their revival from having cut each other in pieces. We are not, however, to suppose that this peculiar mode of diversion was instituted for their amusement only. These heroes were selected on account of their distinguished valour as assistants to the gods at that future period of time, predicted in the Edda, when the evil Genii should burst from their different confinements, to wage war against them, and the destruction of all things ensue. On this account, it is said, their arms were buried with them; but this was a custom very extensive, and of great antiquity. Ajax, in Sophocles' play of that name, orders all his armour, the shield excepted, to be interred with him. Olaus Magnus observes (L. 3. C. 8.) that "when it thundered and lightened, the old Goths would shoot their arrows towards the clouds, in order to assist their Gods, who they supposed were attacked by other Deities." Although they had not received the honour of admission into Odin's hall, they were doubtless willing to shew by their alacrity in espousing his cause, that they deserved it. The following well-known lines have been quoted by most writers who have treated concerning the Northern nations, and have often been indiscriminately applied to the Goths and Celts.

——Certe populi quos despicit Arctos  
Felix errore suo! quos ille timorum  
Maximus haud urget lethi metus; inde ruendi  
In ferrum mens prona viris, animæque capaces,  
Mortis: & ignavum *valitura* parcere vitæ. Lucan, lib. 1.

But



Again their souls with martial fire shall burn,  
And host conflicting adverse host o'erturn ;  
While bright Valkeries, blue-eyed nymphs, shall  
crown

With plausive smiles their actions of renown.  
Be conquest yours, and fame's unfading wreath,  
Or, more than victory, a glorious death !"

This said, the dark'ning cloud, the meteor's  
glare,

And stately form dissolves, and melts in air.

" Be all our warrior's summon'd to the field !

Cried Valdemar, and struck his echoing shield :

On every height your banners wide unfold !

At morn we march ! and let the sun behold,

But the Goths rejected the doctrine of transmigration, to which the passage above alludes, and turned it into ridicule. Thus, in an ancient Edda, ascribed to Samund Frode (Bart. L. 2. C. 1.) it is said: "Credebatur antiquitus homines iterum nasci; illud vero nunc pro anisi errore habetur." The story in the Islandic Edda (Hist. 28.) where the mistleto is represented as a little inconsiderable shrub, made use of by a malevolent being to effect his mischievous purpose, is another instance of their abhorrence, or contempt of the Druidical form of worship. This, probably, was the general established religion among the Celts, the most ancient inhabitants of Europe, at least of the Northern and Western parts, till the Goths, to whom in most countries they were obliged to submit, introduced a different system of religion. Appian, indeed, in his fragment of the Gallic war, says; *Ἐσπερίαν Οὐρανὸν κατασπέρωνται δι' ἐλάτης ἀνὰ δένδρον*. But this passage, it may be supposed, alluded to the Celtic race, before that country was subdued by the followers of Odin.

As

As in the purpled East he rises bright,  
Our arms of splendor emulate his light !”

“ Tho’ Valdemar’s proud banners brave the  
skies,

Beneath his sway we march not ; Hacon cries.

† Know, tho’ a God commands, the soul is free,  
To mortal power we scorn to bend the knee,

Or

† Several instances are given by Bartholine of the little respect shewn to their gods by the old champions of Scandinavia. Nay, to contend with them was considered as the most incontestible proof of consummate heroism. The following speech of Bodvar’s, translated from an ancient Saga, or historical romance, does more credit to the hero’s intrepidity than delicacy of sentiment, or choice of expression. Diomed himself did not treat the god of war with less ceremony than this Gothic Mezentius. “*Odinum hic conspiciere nequeo ; suspicor tamen contra nos hic incedere genium illum fetulentum & pestiferum ; & si quis cum mihi monstrare posset illum instar pessimi & minimi muris contererem ; & venenatam illam bestiam ignominiose tractarem, si manu apprehendere possem.*” (Eart. L. I. C. 6.) He is treated with as little ceremony, though in very different language, by Fingal, in Ossian’s poem, entitled *Carrie-Tura* ; but that the Celts should take such liberties with their enemies’ gods is not so extraordinary. The Goths, as appears from the preceding note, paid as little respect to their religious opinions ; and to the disgrace of a more polished æra it may be observed, that this contempt and hatred to a stranger’s, or enemy’s form of worship, has not been confined to unlettered people in a barbarous age. In the last century, the terms appear too often, as among the old Romans, to have been understood as synonymous

Or yield subjection—no, were Hengist here,  
Whose actions I admire, and fame revere,  
Thus had I spoke : nor deem my words, O king !  
From mean distrust, or canker'd envy spring.  
To lead the Danes, the Saxon bands, be thine ;  
So Hengist will'd, but Norway's sons are mine.  
Resolv'd as brave allies your cause to own,  
And no superior but their king alone."

Cerdic and Ida, Saxons far renown'd,  
Upstarting at the word, indignant frown'd.

nymous. Nay, the most magnificent and accomplished monarch of the time, who reigned over a generous and polished people (it is presumed no Frenchman will controvert the assertion) endeavoured to convert, or exterminate by his military missionaries, one part of his *own* subjects, professing the same faith, but differing as to particular tenets from the other, which happened to be the majority. About a century before their sagacious neighbours the Spaniards exiled or extirpated their most industrious and ingenious fellow-subjects for professing a different faith. It was doubtless a much more weighty cause ! But the mines of Peru and Mexico have not yet made amends for their loss. About the same time likewise they massacred the harmless natives of America for not professing a religion of which they never heard, and for worshipping devils whose attributes were equally unknown to them. The *great devil Setebos* is mentioned in ‡ Magellan's voyage as the Patagonian idol ; and in Shakspear's time, who adopted him for the father of Caliban, some most horrible idea was probably annexed to the name.

‡ Purchas Pilgrims, B. 2. p. 34.

In fiercer wrath the Dacian chieftains rise ;  
 Biorno, Grimal, roll their silent eyes,  
 As secretly they grasp the ready blade,  
 On their lov'd lord. He doubtful, long survey'd  
 His haughty rival ; but reflection quell'd  
 The vengeful thoughts that in his bosom swell'd.

“ If Hacon at our rule, he cried, repine,  
 Be his apart to lead Norwegia's line.  
 Brave are thy warriors, and a foe draws nigh,  
 Who soon their prowess will severely try.  
 Then, generous emulation be our aim,  
 Best to deserve, and win the meed of fame !”

Performing barbarous rites, a gloomy band,  
 The priests all night before their altars stand.  
 Meanwhile, in cadence low, or choral chime,  
 The bards alternate wake the Runic rhyme,  
 With † mystic import fraught : but chief to thee,  
 Swells the full peal of mingled harmony,

Dread

† The invention of letters is attributed to Odin, and in the Edda of Sæmund Frode he is called the “fire of spells.” In an old poem entitled the Runic Chapter, or the *Magic of Odin*, (Mallet v. 2.) he boasts that by the use of the Runic characters, and power of poetical numbers, he could raise the dead, and produce the most strange and miraculous effects.—These characters, it may be supposed, were merely the common letters of the Gothic alphabet, and represented by those few who could write and read, as possessing a mysterious nature and hidden virtue, to their barbarous country-

men.



Dread god of battle ! so they fondly deem,  
 Bewilder'd, lost in error's fatal dream.  
 Now, a vain shadow, and an empty name,  
 Is he, who foremost trod the fields of fame.  
 Not his the form that struck their wond'ring sight,  
 Urda that form assum'd thro' magic sleight.  
 And whilst their rugged altars stream with gore,  
 And their wild cries the hapless victims pour ;  
 Whilst lost in trance extatic seems the seer,  
 Whose words as heaven's high dictates they re-  
                   vere,

Urda his soul with high-wrought frenzy fires,  
 And fate's ambiguous oracles inspires.

“ Sons of the North ! ignoble fear despise ;  
 Propitious smiles the god who rules the skies :  
 And, as the wild winds, mingling in their course,  
 O'erturn the forest with united force ;

men. Sheringham asserts, that after the introduction of Christianity, its zealous converts not only destroyed a great number of these pretended charms, but defaced many records and monumental inscriptions, by which means the history of the Goths has been irreparably injured. Many of the lower class of people still attribute a hidden virtue to amulets and magical inscriptions ; an opinion doubtless derived from our Gothic forefathers. In process of time the less they were understood, the more mysterious and terrible they appeared to be ; and the old mode of writing was called, and now is, by many who little apprehend its origin, *casting a figure*.

Your strength united shall dismay the foe ;  
And lay the towering ranks of battle low.  
Unwonted fear shall seize the hostile band,  
And the pois'd lance drop from the valiant hand.  
Unless your heroes first in arms renown'd,  
Plant in each other's breast the deadly wound ;  
Arthur shall ne'er the British throne ascend,  
But all his dream of pride in ruin end."

He ceas'd ; convulsions shook his lab'ring frame,  
And his red eye-balls gleam'd with living flame ;  
'Then, as th' inspiring fiend forsook his breast,  
He sunk unconscious in the arms of rest.

With loud acclaim the priests and minstrel train,  
The presage hail, and pour the suppliant strain.  
" Hear, mighty father of thy battle ! hear,  
Lift thy broad buckler, shake the flashing spear !  
With wrath's dark cloud thy awful brows invest,  
And scatter terror from thy nodding crest !  
'The foes shall sink beneath the dreadful sight,  
And ghastly horror seize them in the fight."

Faint streaks of light shoot thro' the eastern  
    skies,  
And wrapt in mist the distant mountains rise.  
As round their hollow oak bees swarming play,  
When the sun downward shoots his fervid ray,  
Athwart, direct, along the echoing plain  
In wild confusion pour the martial train ;

Till

Till rang'd in order by their leader's care,  
The clarion sounds, and onward rolls the war.

In two black columns their destructive way  
They bend ; like clouds in summer's sultry day :  
Each in his womb the lurking thunder hides,  
And waving lightnings edge their sable sides.

In Nubia's deserts, by th' attractive beam  
Of heaven exhal'd, as poisonous vapours steam,  
Ascend the skies, and from their dragging wings  
Shake pestilence, and death's pernicious stings ;  
Such havoc marks their course : by sword, by fire,  
The land lies waste, and man and beast expire.

Where Deva's streams the Cestrian plains divide,  
Hacon and Denmark's lord, on either side,  
High-towering in their battle's front, pursu'd  
Their rapid way : at length the warriors view'd  
The distant heights in clouds of dust array'd,  
And arms faint-gleaming thro' the rolling shade.

“ Behold, fierce Hacon cried, behold our foes !  
(Whilst in his soul the martial transport rose)  
To rage unbounded give the loosen'd rein !  
Banquet your hungry falchions on the slain !  
Impel, as meteors cleave the vault of night,  
A radiant shower ! your shafts' destructive flight !  
In British blood the vengeful spear embrue,  
And give the sacrifice to odin due !”

Fired by their monarch's words, his daring train  
Advanc'd impetuous o'er the sounding plain.

As

As Valdemar their rapid march beheld,  
Athwart the current swiftly he impell'd  
His bounding steed ; the furious king addrest,  
And thus the ardour of his soul repress.

“ If terror-struck yon warriors shun'd the fight,  
It then were fit to urge their shameful flight ;  
But lo ! defiance stern their battle wears :  
Still, as of old, amid the shock of spears,  
On highest deeds resolv'd is Britain's train,  
To die or conquer—fame to give or gain.  
Then, let us wait till morn the skies illumine,  
To prove our matchless force, and seal their doom.  
For see, the sun descending from his height,  
Discloses many a gulf of dazzling light  
Thro' black, obstructing clouds that westward rise,  
And now in sanguine radiance cloaths the skies.  
A dreadful omen of the coming day  
To Britain's race. Soon o'er their destin'd prey  
The birds of heaven shall shake their founding  
wings,  
Exulting—the gaunt wolf shall feast on kings.  
'Tis ours, let dastards veil their acts in night,  
To claim the sun a witness to our might.”

Hacon assents : heaven's setting splendors gild  
The snow-white tents.—Thus scatter'd o'er the  
field,

Appears



Appears the fleecy flock at even tide,  
Recumbent by the fountain's rushy fide.

Not thrice an arrow's flight across the plain  
Approach the vanguard of the hostile train.  
Their cornets found ; their fiery courfers neigh,  
And high in air their waving banners play.

END OF BOOK FOURTH.

N

A R T H U R;

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NORTHERN ENCHANTMENT.

B O O K F I F T H.

## A R G U M E N T.

*APOSTROPHE to Ambition. Lancelot orders Fiacha, an Irish king, with part of the army to oppose Hacon's forces, that were separated by a stream from those of Valdemar, which he with the other part proposed to attack. Hacon's bards sing the song of battle. The action described. Hacon and Sweno distinguish themselves: the latter kills Fiacha. The Irish give way. Arthur appears; restores the battle; puts the Norwegians to flight, and kills Sweno. Hacon laments over him, and, accompanied by the bards, carries off his dead body to bury it. Combat between Valdemar and Lancelot. The horse of the former falls: the latter is wounded. The bravest knights hasten to his assistance, and make great havoc among the enemy: are repelled by Valdemar, who again turns the fortune of the day. Loud groans and shrieks are heard from the Saxon quarter. Ida, one of their leaders, informs Valdemar that Arthur had killed their bravest chieftains; requests him to revenge them and dies. Valdemar prepares to attack Arthur, but the weird sisters, dreading the event of the combat, cause his horse (inspired by a demon) to bear him from the fight. Arthur pursues him, but in vain. The horse drops dead beneath Valdemar. His lamentation: a reflection in consequence of it.*



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# A R T H U R ;

OR, THE

NORTHERN ENCHANTMENT.

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*B O O K F I F T H.*

WHEN first Ambition, ill betide the day !  
From hell arose, and mark'd mankind her prey ;  
Her fatal spells thro' air insidious hurl'd,  
And waked to deeds of death a peaceful world:  
Since that sad hour no more the human breast,  
Meek amity and mutual faith possess.  
In wrath she came, with Terror by her side,  
And Danger's giant form :—o'erweening Pride,  
With crest erect, her glittering standard bore,  
And fell Contention bath'd her steps in gore.  
With specious words she dignified disgrace :  
Slaughter's dire course was Glory's arduous race.  
Prevailing Might gain'd Virtue's hallow'd name,  
And lust of sway was sacred thirst of fame.

To

To nobler thoughts, ye rulers of mankind,  
Awake, nor let delusion warp your mind !  
Nor pomp, pride, conquest, sooth the troubled  
breast,

Like acts humane—but blessing, man is blest.

By slow degrees, night's sable veil withdrawn,  
Dim o'er the mountains rose the chequer'd dawn.  
And now th' auxiliar kings and knights renown'd,  
In arms array'd, the † British chief surround.  
He, forward leaning on his beam-like spear,  
Address them thus : Ye generous heroes hear !  
Since, such your will, and may the power divine  
The choice approve ! to guide the war is mine ;  
Last night, these watchful eyes forbade to close,  
Secret, I mark'd th' encampment of our foes.  
Where to the left loud clamours rend the sky,  
A numerous host, the fierce Norwegians lie.  
'Gainst them, while Clodion lends his willing aid,  
Ierne's bands let bold Fiacha lead.  
More distant to the right, beside the stream,  
(Faint through the fading mist its waters gleam)  
Are rang'd with Denmark's sons the Saxon powers;  
By Hoel join'd, to prove their force, is ours.  
With transport I behold my gallant friends,  
Whose zeal in Britain's cause all praise transcends,

† Lancelot.

Approve

Approve my words. Haste then, the time demands  
 Haste, and to glory lead your martial bands.  
 Her willing victims let us fall renown'd;  
 Or meet, exulting meet, with conquest crown'd!"

He said, applauding voices rend the air;  
 The dauntless leaders to their posts repair.  
 Th' appointed signal's given, the black array  
 Of war divides: beneath Fiacha's sway,  
 His fearless bands their sounding course pursue  
 'Gainst Hacon's powers, who kindled at the view.  
 On his barb'd steed that proudly paw'd the  
                   ground,

There, clad in steel, the stern Norwegian frown'd.  
 In loose array, wide scatter'd o'er the plain,  
 Rush'd Thule's bands, and Gotia's archer train.  
 Not e'en Laponia's storm-wrapt coast could screen  
 Her harmless offspring from the deathful scene.  
 Compell'd by Norway's gloomy lord they rear  
 The targe fur-cinctur'd, and the bone-tip'd spear.  
 By fish, roots, herbs, the gentle race were fed;  
 The sunless cave their dwelling, earth their bed.  
 On roaring seas in slight canoes to sail,  
 With well-aim'd darts to pierce th' unwieldy  
                   whale;

Their destin'd course to make the rein-deer know,  
 Steer the smooth sledge o'er trackless wastes of  
                   snow;

T' entrap



T' entrap the wily fox, the bird ensnare ;  
On floating ice surprise the sluggish bear ;  
These were their arts alone,—unfit to wield  
The arms of heroes in th' embattled field.  
Their soothing hope that soon their toils would  
cease,

And Genii guide them to the bowers of peace :  
Where, in the land of souls, a blissful shore,  
No ruthless tyrants should molest them more.  
No tempests rage, no hail, nor snow descend,  
No fearful lightning glare, nor thunder rend  
Heaven's azure vault, but cloudless radiance gild  
The sky, and ceaseless verdure deck the field.

Foremost the king advanc'd, and bade the \*  
found,  
That calls to battles, rise : his bards renown'd,  
Ofwald

\* The Scalds attended their monarchs to the field, to excite their valour, witness their exploits, and deliver them in their songs to posterity. The Persian Magi are supposed by Bartholine (L. 1. C. 10.) to have acted in the same capacity; but his quotations from Quintus Curtius (L. 3. C. 3. L. 5. C. 1.) only prove that they attended their kings in their military expeditions, to sing devotional hymns, and compose panegyrics on them. Mithridates is likewise said to have carried bards, or historians with him for the same purpose; and Odin, according to Mallet's system, acted as his ally against the Romans; to avoid whom he led his forces into Scandinavia, and subjugated, or extirpated its former inhabitants. The high



Oswald and Eric thus his will obey:  
The plain re-echoes to the lofty lay.

“ Dark on his cloud, unseen by mortal eye,  
The ruler of the battle sits on high,

high estimation, however, in which the bards were held, and their peculiar office alluded to in the poem, was not confined, or appropriate to the Gothic nations. The Orthian song of the Greeks nearly resembled a Scandinavian war-song, according to the account given by A. Gellius, (L. 16. C. 19.) as likewise does that passage in the 11th Iliad; where Minerva by singing it, inspires the whole army with military ardour. That the Celtic bards of the North acted in the same capacity as the Gothic, admits of no doubt. According to Ossian, they were of such importance, that without an Epicedium sung by them, the departed spirit could not ascend to the clouds, and airy halls of the mighty; but wander'd with the ghosts of the feeble, round marshes and sequestered vallies. To “ live in the song of the bards” was doubtless their great incitement to heroic actions; and similar sentiments prevailed in ancient Greece. “ The noble exploits, says Pindar, recorded by famous bards last to eternity.”

————— γινώσκουμενα

ἄρετα κλειναῖς αἰοδαῖς

χρὸνιά τελεθεῖ —————

Pyth. Ode 3.

Passages to the same purport are to be met with in the 7th and 11th Olympic, and 7th Nemean Ode.

It appears likewise from him, that the *song of the bard* was as much coveted by the victor in the Olympic games, as it was by the successful combatant in the tournament.

αἰθλονικία μάλισ' αἰδαν

φιλε, στεφανῶν ἀρετὰν τε

δεδιωτᾶν ὀπαδόν.

Nem. Ode 3.

Bread

Dread Odin, first of heavenly powers ador'd,  
 \* With shafts of death ten thousand quivers stor'd  
 Stand by his side : The fatal bow he bends ;  
 And wide around the rapid shower descends.  
 In silence flits thro' air each viewless dart,  
 And fills with torturing pangs the dastard's heart.  
 'To † Hela's drear abodes embrown'd in night,  
 Their feeble spirits urge their downward flight,  
 Not so the brave, no fears their minds controul,  
 Unfelt their wounds, unvanquish'd is their soul.  
 Death then is more than victory !—The God  
 Of battle hails them to his bright abode.  
 For them he bids the plenteous banquet shine,  
 And the bowl flow with Hydromel divine.  
 Rise then, exulting in your might arise !  
 Conquest or death alike the valiant prize.  
 This, shall your days on earth with honour crown;  
 That feat you mid the gods, and chiefs of old  
 renown."

While thus the bards awak'd th' inspiring song,  
 Extatic fury seiz'd the martial throng :

\* " He who causes the arrows to shower down," is one of Odin's epithets in the Edda.

† Hela is supposed to have been the offspring of Loke, the Scandinavian Satan, or evil Principle ; and to have been precipitated by the Gods into Niflein or Hell, there to reign over all those who behaved in a dastardly manner, or died of age or sickness.

And,

And, as the close-compacted lines advance,  
(Thro' winter's watry cloud thus sun-beams  
glance,

When threatening storms th' unshelter'd swain  
affright, )

On either side full many a gallant knight,  
Burst thro' the gloom of war with loosen'd rein,  
Couch'd the strong lance, and blazed athwart  
the plain.

More dreadful now the din of battle grows ;  
Spears clash with spears, with bucklers bucklers  
close.

Shrill flits the arrow from the twanging string,  
And stones on batter'd mail rebounding ring.  
The keen-edged falchion, helm, and hawberk  
rends ;

The ponderous axe with thundering sound de-  
scends,

The trump's loud clangors mixt with dying cries,  
And shouts of wrathful heroes shake the skies.

Th' unhallow'd sisters to the clouds repair,  
And darkly-hovering on the wings of air,  
Like famish'd vulturs, mark'd with keen delight  
The fall of warriors, and the waste of fight.

Here, furious Hacon with resistless force  
Thro' yielding ranks impells his foaming horse.  
Emania's monarch there, with matchless might  
Wields his huge mace, and prostrate lays the fight.

I

Thy



Thy course of glory, Sweno, who can trace?  
 Thy foe's destruction, and thy country's grace!  
 While shook the brave, no terror Conal knew,  
 To prove his might athwart the plain he flew.  
 Nor strength, nor skill 'gainst Hacon's son avail,  
 Nor massy buckler, nor protecting mail:  
 The fatal spear thro' shield and corslet flies,  
 And stretch'd in dust the hapless warrior lies.

Unconscious of her much-lov'd hero's fall,  
 Ithona sits in Thomond's lofty hall,  
 And bids the bands to him awake their lays—  
 For who like Conal claim'd the meed of praise!  
 Sudden, ere yet they touch'd the warbling wire,  
 Burst mournful sounds instinctive from the lyre:  
 And lo! the dogs, companions of the chase,  
 In shuddering terror gaze on vacant space.  
 Their \* lord's sad image rises to their view;  
 Faint gleam his arms, and pallid is his hue.

His

\* The images in this passage are borrowed from Ossian.  
 "It was formerly the opinion, says Mr. Macpherson, that the  
 souls of heroes went immediately after their death to the hills  
 of their country, and the scenes they frequented the most hap-  
 py times of their life. It was thought too, that dogs and  
 horses saw the ghosts of the deceased." The opinion that  
 dogs perceived the appearance of any supernatural being pre-  
 vailed likewise in ancient Greece. Those of Eumæus (*Odyss.*  
*B. 16. L. 62.*) are described as being terrified at the sight of  
 Minerva, though at the same time she was invisible to Tele-  
 machus.



His dimly-rolling eyes on Thomond's fair  
In grief he bends; then borne aloft in air,  
And wrapt in darkness on the gale he flies;  
Deep mourn the faithful train, and howlings wild  
arise.

She marks the signs that speak her hero low;  
Rends her dark tresses, beats her breast of snow,  
And gives her days to solitary woe. }

Before his bands see Neustria's chief advance!  
A bold Norwegian sinks beneath his lance.  
As from his side the weighty spear he rends,  
On his strong vantbrass Hacon's sword descends,  
And sheers him to the bone. His knightly train  
Rush to his aid, and bear him from the plain.

Of strength unyielding, spirit unsubdued,  
Like some dark rock that braves the furling flood,  
Emania's monarch stands unmov'd: the tide  
Of battle rolls, and breaks against his side.  
Now here, now there, he deals the deadly wound,  
And mangled corsees strew th' ensanguin'd ground.

machus. It is remarkable that a similar kind of superstition should still prevail among our country people; but Addison drew from real life when he represents a servant terrified at "the candle's burning blue, and the spayed bitch's looking as if *she saw something*." To which the others answer very characteristically: "Ay poor cur, she is almost frightened out of her wits;—I warrant ye, she hears him (the supposed ghost) many a time, and often when we don't."

Norwegia's leader thundering thro' the field,  
Against the warrior's breast his lance impell'd.  
Unwounded he sustain'd the mighty shock ;  
The pointed lance on his strong corset broke.  
Hacon again, his courser check'd, prepares  
T'affail the chief ? his flaming falchion bares,  
Then forward spurs the steed : his mace on high  
Fiacha lifts—As hissing thro' the sky  
Th' impetuous bolt descends, the blow he sped  
Full on th' advancing courser's mail-clad head :  
Breathless he sunk, and headlong on the plain  
The monarch hurl'd : Emania's lord again  
Lifts the dread mace.—What now, O king ! avail  
Thy numerous warriors, and thy temper'd mail.  
No temper'd mail resists Fiacha's might ;  
Thy warriors distant tremble at the sight.

But generous Sweno marks thee lowly laid,  
And hastes with pious valour to thy aid.  
Beneath the lifted arm he swift addrest  
The levell'd spear : thro' great Fiacha's chest  
Its furious way the vengeful weapon tore,  
And issu'd far beyond, embath'd in gore.  
Thundering he falls, the ponderous mace foregoes,  
And o'er his eyes the shades of darkness close.

Ierne's bands in terror quit the field :  
Maronan, Adamar, reluctant yield.  
Oft lion-like they turn, and, in the strife,  
Gore the proud hunters that pursue their life.

Lo !

Lo ! darting thro' the plain, in arms whose blaze  
Rivall'd the summer sun's meridian rays,  
A stately knight, on his hot courser borne,  
That champ'd the golden bit he seem'd to scorn,  
Appear'd, and loudly thus : " To pale affright  
Shall Arthur's friends submit in Arthur's fight ?  
The dastard meets the fate he shuns ; the brave  
By generous contest triumph o'er the grave."

Enraptur'd they behold, enraptur'd hear  
The hero's voice, and scorn their former fear.  
Again they turn, they form the deepning line,  
And close-wedg'd shields a glittering rampart  
shine.

Chill, watry vapours thus that float on high,  
Their grey robes waving thro' the wintry sky,  
From ice-clad realms when bursts the polar blast,  
Condense, then gathering shade on shade, o'ercast  
The front of heaven ; and on the ravag'd vale  
Pour the sharp fleet, and loud-reshounding hail.

Meanwhile the prince darts furious on his foes ;  
A grove of spears the dauntless prince enclose :  
He braves, he meets the shock ; and whirls around  
His dreadful sword that gives no second wound :  
Bursts unresisted thro' the black array ;  
His course is mark'd with death, and terror points  
his way !

An eagle thus, when o'er Plinlimmon's head  
Descending clouds a robe of darkness spread,

Wings



Wings thro' th' encircling gloom his rapid flight,  
Then soars exulting mid the fields of light.

Can words his actions paint, when valor's flame  
Glow'd in his eyes, and lighten'd in his frame?  
Where'er he rush'd, more fierce the tumult roar'd,  
Around his course the blood of thousands pour'd.  
Beneath th' ethereal fire's resistless stroke,  
As sinks the lofty pine, the knotted oak,  
Heroes and kings beneath his matchless might  
Bestrew the plain: the crowded ranks of fight  
Like sun-drawn mists dissolve. The pitying muse  
Death's wasteful course reluctantly pursues.

To one alone, who claims th' applauding lay,  
'Tis her's the tributary strain to pay;  
Hacon's brave son—No equal yet he found!  
By Deva's banks he spreads destruction round.  
His lance arrests the dastard as he flies;  
His force the valiant proves, and proving dies.  
But short the triumph—Uther's son draws near,  
And fate dim hovers round his beaming spear.

“Secure of glory in the living lay,  
No longer urge to fame thy dangerous way!  
Retire, nor brave yon terror of the plain;”  
Thus warn'd Norwegia's bards, but warn'd the  
youth in vain.

Hurl'd from his seat, beside the stream he lies;  
Life's fading taper in his swimming eyes

Dim-



Dim-twinkling gleams : his golden locks bestrew  
 The plain ; while struck with horror at the view,  
 His faithful steed the languid head declines ;  
 On the green bank his shatter'd helmet shines ;  
 O'er his broad buckler rolls the torrent grey,  
 And ting'd with blood pursues its mazy way.

'The Briton marks with grief th' expiring foe ;  
 "Perchance, he cries, not mortal is the blow.  
 Few are thy years, yet mighty were thy deeds ;  
 And sorrow melts my soul when valour bleeds."  
 Thus he replied with weak and struggling breath ;  
 \* "I meet the warriors doom, and welcome death.

To

\* The Massagetes, according to Strabo (Geó. L. II.) considered those who died of sickness as wicked people, and gave their bodies to be devoured by wild beasts. To prevent the increase of such iniquity, Herodotus says, that the old people were commonly sacrificed to the Gods by their nearest relations. To fall in battle, indeed, was held by all the Gothic nations as the most desirable kind of death. Sivard, a Danish hero, who unfortunately had not been able to acquire that honour, perceiving his fate approaching, buckled on his armour, that he might die, in appearance at least, as became a warrior. His speech, as given by Bartholine, is extremely striking. The rude majesty of the sentiment would have done honour to an old Roman in the most heroic ages of the commonwealth ; and the energy with which it is expressed, would not have disgraced a Livy, or a Tacitus. "Quantus pudor me tot in bellis mori non potuisse, ut vaccarum morticum dedecore reservarer ? Induite me saltem lorica meâ impenetrabili ;

To swell another's fame, disgraceful thought !  
Vanquish'd to live, were life too dearly bought.

No,

penetrabili ; præcingite gladio ; sublimitate galeæ ; scutum in lævâ, securim auratam mihi ponite in dextrâ, ut militum fortissimus modo militis moriar ! Dixerat, & ut dixerat armatus, honorificè expiravit. (L. I. C. 4.)”

This identical hero is introduced in Macbeth, and the slight sketch there given of him is perfectly consonant to his historical character. The anecdote which Shakspeare relates, is to be found in the Polychronicon of Ranulph Higden, who lived in Richard II's time, and died about the year 1362.

To fall by the hands of a valiant person was likewise thought essential towards establishing any considerable degree of posthumous fame. Starchaterus, a Swedish champion, on finding old age approaching, is said to have solicited a warrior, in the following manner, to put an end to his life.

Præterea, Hather, privavi te patre Lenno.

Hunc mihi quæso vicem referas, & obire volentem

Sterne senem, jugulumque meum pete vindice ferro :

Quippe opem clari mens percussoris adoptat.

He proceeds to observe, that a young tree should be fostered, and an old one cut down ; and that we have a right to anticipate what cannot be avoided. Hatherus could not resist so reasonable a request, supported by such convincing arguments. Starchaterus, of whom many curious anecdotes are related by Saxo, Joannes Magnus, and Olaus Magnus, was a very extraordinary character. The most celebrated hero of the age, a giant and a bard. His poetry, from what appears at least, translated into Latin verse by Saxo Grammaticus, consists chiefly in commemorating his own exploits and, what could scarcely be supposed, in invectives against luxurious indulgencies. In the narrative which he gives of his military transactions,

No, since 'tis mine to fall beneath the brave,  
 I mourn not ; for what honour deigns to crave,  
Honour

transactions, he boasts of chastising a smith in the following manner ;

——fabrumque procacem  
 Multavi natibus cæsis.

The passage is not of a very heroic cast ; but as this ill-starred knight of the forge is introduced with kings and champions, it may tend to strengthen an observation in a former \* note, that smiths or armourers in the heroic ages were people of no vulgar estimation.

Luxury, as it has been remarked, is a vague idea, and varies with the times. We do not even condemn those as luxurious, to furnish whose slightest repast the East and West Indies are laid under contribution : for whom the native of Africa explores the American mine ; and, to decorate whose table, porcelain is brought from the extremity of Asia—for that of the artizan, or the peasant's wife at their daily breakfast, is generally graced with those far-fetched materials. The case is so common, we are not at all surprised about it. Starchaterus' notions of luxury, as might be imagined, are not exactly consonant to those entertained at present. He supposes it to consist in eating roast meat out of clean dishes, and drinking metheglin ; and particularly recommends raw flesh, the repast it is said of modern boxers, as the proper food for warriors.

Fortium crudus cibus est virorum :  
 Nec reor lautis opus esse mensis,

\* Page 55.



Honour will grant ; and Britain's generous chief  
 Accord my suit : to sooth a father's grief,  
 My arms, and breathless corse restore !" — He said,  
 His dim eyes clos'd—the gallant spirit fled.

“ Farewell, brave youth ! thus Uther's gene-  
                   rous son

Mournful exclaim'd, what glory hadst thou won,  
 If fate vouchsaf'd thee but a longer day !  
 Sweno, farewell ! thou bright, but transient ray—

Mens quibus belli meditatur usum

Pectore forti.

Cream, he styles, somewhat contemptuously, *lacteum adipem*, and stigmatizes his degenerate countrymen with an ignominious attachment to milk ! He says one might sooner bite off their *bristled beards*, than prevail on them to quit such gluttonous indulgencies.

Aptius barbam poteras rigentem

Mordicus presso lacerare dente,

Quam vorax lactis vacuare sinum

Ore capaci.

In opposition to these Gothic Apicii, he celebrates a king of Norway, who adopted different maxims, and lived according to the laudable simplicity of former times. “ *Talibus argumentis,*” says the good archbishop of Upsal, “ *plurimos ad temperantiam. & sobrietatem, ceterasque virtutes induxit.*”—From this ode Dr. Johnson probably took the hint on which he composed the 96th number of the *Idler*. A namesake of the Norwegian hero's is there introduced ; but, instead of holding metheglin in generous contempt like the former, he falls a sacrifice to the depravity of his appetite, tempted by the rich flavour of an honey-comb.

Ap-



Approach ye sacred bards, to whom belong  
 The warbling lyre, and joy-diffusing song.  
 Not against you the vengeful blade we raise,  
 Who bid the \* hero live to future days—  
 Approach in safety, and dismiss your fear :  
 To his sad fire the breathless warrior bear ;  
 And (may it sooth his troubled breast) relate  
 He fell by Arthur, who bewail'd his fate."

Hacon, retir'd beyond the martial lines,  
 With toil fore-spent, to younger knights resigns  
 The field of glory ; and beholds from far,  
 In wonder lost, the surging tide of war  
 Roll backward : but amazement soon suppress'd,  
 To grief consign'd the empire of his breast.

His hapless son before his view is laid :  
 In speechless agony he marks the dead.  
 Lost is the warrior's firmness, that defied  
 The power of fortune—lost the regal pride,  
 That mock'd at woe : the heart-wrung tear descends,

The hoary honours of his head he rends :  
 And, while his bosom throbs with frequent sighs,  
 Clasping the clay-cold corse on earth he lies.

His bards indignant mark his frantic grief ;  
 When Oswald thus : " Is this the haughty chief,

\* ——— μεγαλάρους υμνοι

ὑπερων αρχαι λογαν ———

PINDAR.

Who

Who wades to fame thro' war's empurpled tide,  
Terror his lov'd compeer, and Death his guide!  
Can he lament the warrior's envied state,  
By valour plac'd beyond the reach of fate?  
His destin'd course thy son with honour ran,  
And fell a hero ere he lived a man.  
That be his praise, to glory in it thine;  
'Tis Hacon's right to triumph, not repine!"

"Cease, cease, he cried: can words relief impart,  
And pluck the shaft of anguish from my heart?  
Behold yon blasted oak! canst thou array  
Its wither'd branches in the pomp of May?  
Bid it again exalt its towering head,  
And to the winds its leafy honours spread?  
Spring will return—but ne'er returning spring  
Around its trunk the verdant wreath shall fling;  
Nor time revolving to my view restore  
My hero's budding honours—He no more  
Shall shelter yield in danger's stormy day—  
And shall I lonely moulder to decay,  
A burthen to the earth?"—With vengeful mind  
He mounts his steed; when Eric thus rejoined.

"Canst thou withstand, enfeebled by thy  
wounds,

And length of years, yon warrior who confounds  
Embattled armies? Hence, the thought resign!  
On other realms the beams of glory shine.

Again

Again thy prowess shall be shewn ; again  
Our crowded sails shall shade the burthen'd  
main ;

Thy wonted field of honour, where the brave  
Reap fame's rich harvest on the rolling wave.  
Shall Sweno's lovely form be given the prey  
To ravenous wolves ? wilt thou deny the lay  
To Sweno's praise ? the rites sepulchral paid,  
Then think of vengeance to atone his shade."

The King reluctant yields : his glaring eyes  
He backward turns, whilst in his bosom rise  
Conflicting passions : oft he checks his course,  
And grasps his sword, and longs its wonted force  
Once more to prove : at length to fate resign'd,  
He flies—the storm of battle roars behind.

But where the might of Valdemar engag'd,  
And Lancelot the direful conflict wag'd,  
Both skill'd alike in knightly lists to dare,  
Or wield the thunder of collected war,  
There, either host to yield or fly disdain'd ;  
There, equal valour, equal fury reign'd :  
'Mid' slaughter'd heaps smiled terror's ghastly  
king,

And conquest hover'd with suspended wing.

Elate with conscious might, inflam'd with ire,  
The leaders meet : on either side retire  
The hostile bands : on them their hopes rely :  
With timorous expectation every eye

On

On them is bent—no longer roar the plains  
With shouts and clanging arms, but awful silence  
reigns.

Soon rag'd the combat, on each temper'd shield  
The tough spears shivering sparkled o'er the field.  
Each from his side the trenchant falchion drew ;  
In flaming circles round their heads they flew.  
With lightning-speed the rapid blow descends ;  
Shares the broad buckler, helm, and hawberk  
rends.

Tho' breathless, faint, still fury strength supplies,  
And gushing blood the mail with crimson dyes.  
Awhile they close, then wheel their steeds around,  
At greater length to aim the deadly wound.  
When, trampling on his master's splinter'd spear,  
The Danish courser stop'd in mid career,  
Then flound'ring sunk ; the steely point upsprung  
Thro' the tough hoof, and pain his bosom wrung.

The British knight, whose generous soul dis-  
dain'd

Th' advantage chance allow'd, his courser rein'd :  
Resolv'd on foot to end the direful strife.—

But Dacia trembled for her champion's life.

On Lancelot, loud-hissing thro' the sky,  
Spears, darts, and stones, a mingled tempest, fly.  
Some from the plated mail innocuous bound ;  
Some gore his breast with many a painful wound,

Yet



Yet short of death they fall ; in arms again  
The knight shall shine the terror of the plain.

\* Minstrels of various climes shall sound his praise,  
And give his glory to remotest days.

To

\* It is somewhat remarkable that the hero of the most popular romances has seldom been represented as a native of that country, in whose language his exploits are celebrated. The English adopted Arthur, who so bravely repell'd the incursions of their ancestors. The French, in a great measure followed their example. No character appears to have been more frequently introduced, or more highly celebrated than his in their earliest compositions of this kind. But Amadis de Gaule, if we credit Don Quixote, no incompetent authority in these matters, gave name to the first and most popular romance in Spain ; and the oldest Italian writers who exhibit the imaginary exploits of chivalry, those at least who have conferred the greatest honour on that nation by their inventive and poetical merit, have represented Charlemagne as the principal personage, and Orlando as the most enterprising character in their performances. If again, we refer to the patron saints of these nations, (and the instances might be extended) who by some means or other have been converted into knights-errant, we shall find they have been adopted and naturalized with as little discretion. The Italians derived theirs from Egypt, and the Spaniards from Judæa. The latter probably forgot, when they instituted the Inquisition that they were persecuting their saint's countrymen ; it certainly does not appear to have been a well-chosen method for conciliating his favour. The French saint was born at Athens ; and ours, if ever born at all, in Cappadocia. The Welsh alone have chosen a hero and Saint, with a laudable  
kind

To save their friend, see Bedevere arise ;  
 See, vengeance flames in youthful Gawaine's eyes.  
 His

kind of patriotism, from their own country; nay from the same family, for David is said, by the mother's side, to have been uncle to Arthur. Their knights, among whom Lancelot made a principal figure, have gained an establishment in most of the European languages. France claims the merit, if any be allowed, of inventing that species of composition called *Romance*; which is formed on the basis of the metrical tales of the ancient bards, and supposed to have taken its name from the mixture of the language of the Franks, and barbarous Latin spoken by the French in the ninth Century. The first marvellous stories, however, to which they annexed that title, appear rather to have been adopted, than genuine produce of that country. Arthur, or one of his knights, is commonly the hero of the Tale; and is it not most probable that they borrowed them from the Britons who settled in Armorica soon after the Saxon Invasion? They commonly assign to Arthur the sovereignty of that province, where he occasionally holds his court and presides at the *Round Table*. A presumptive evidence both of his existence, and extensive authority. Those who have allowed the former, have strongly denied the latter; the following extract from a Swedish Historian may excite some doubt; at least it is too remarkable to require any apology for inserting it.

The Author, Joannes Magnus, was the predecessor of Olaus Magnus in the archiepiscopal see of Upsal; who speaks of him in the preface to his account of the Northern performance *Sanctissimum Volumen!* It may be proper to premise that Herald or Herold, leader of the Danes, being overthrown in battle by Tordokking of Sweden, fled to Britain, to collect succours in defence of his native country.

“ Præerat

His axe, the death of heroes, Lonval rears ;  
Beorte plunges mid the strife of spears :

Urien's

“ Præerat eo tempore Britannis ille invictissimus rex Arthurus, de cujus amplissimo imperio & mirificis triumphis, plura in historicis monumentis traduntur, quam facile credi possint. Hic igitur ab Heroldo contra Tordonem opem ferre rogatus, non gravate amici precibus annuit; præfatus se nihil libentius unquam egisse, quam illud bellum cum rege potensissimo acturus esset, qui illa fortissima Gothorum & Sueconum gente, cæterisque validissimis populis stipatus esset. Educitur itaque ex Britannia, Gallia, Hollandia, maxima classis, in qua innumerabilis pugnatorum multitudo ad Danicæ liberationem advehebatur: quæ etiam maximis Scotorum copiis, quas eorum rex Anguischelus ducebat, adaucta; a Tordone non minore potentia ad navale bellum præparato, intra illud fretum, quod Cimbro a Gothis separat, excepta est; statimque ad acerrimum prælium deventum est; quod toto triduo adeo pertinacibus animis ob summam utriusque partis virtutem agebatur, ut neutra earum saltem conjecturare posset, quorsum victoria sese inclinaret. Tandem Germanica classis Gothos Suenosque a tergo invadens, Arthurum, cujus signa sequebatur, victoriæ compotem sine mora effecit; ipsosque ut potius se, suamque patriam conservare, quam Danis imperare curaret, coegit. Itaque Arthurus tam gloriosam victoriam assecutus, Daniam ipsam, non Danis (ut sperabant) sed sibi, suisque Britannis ac Scotis subjectam esse volebat. Quo facto infelices Dani, cum se ab uno Sueconum Gothorumque iugo liberatos putarent, geminum, imo multiplex, idemque longe atrocius sibi impositum experiebantur; sub quo diutius oppressi non modo ab Anglis & Scotis, verum etiam a Norvegiis, quibus Arthurus (teste historia Scotica) consanguineum suum Loth in regem præfecerat; præterea a Vandalis, &

K

Teutonibus,



Urien's undaunted breast with fury burns ;  
And Hoel's arm the ranks of war o'erturns.

To

Teutonibus, a Gallis & Frisiis, cæterisque populis Arthuro subjectis, plurimum divexabantur, quamvis Anglorum jugum sæpius excutere tentantes, Arthurum ad pertinacem victoriam provocasse videbantur. Quanto autem tempore Dania sub tam gravi tyrannorum jugo laboraverit, Historiæ, quas sequor, non explicant."

It is not clear to what histories he alludes. The Scalds were the sole historians among the Goths in the early ages. Those of Iceland (the Scandinavian Athens in those days) were held in the highest estimation; and Snorro Sturleson, who was chief magistrate there in the 13th century, who compiled from them the Islandic Edda, and ancient history of Norway, calls them, *vetustissimi & fide digni*. Another writer entitles their narratives *certa & luculenta documenta*. Joannes Magnus likewise, in his preface, declares, that from those narratives, from inscriptions on rocks and stones, and from ancient manuscripts preserved in the Cathedral at Upsal, &c. he had framed a history, of which truth, not fictitious ornament, should be the leading characteristic." "*Quæ veritatem potius quam eloquentiam exhibebit.*"—The preceding quotation may be taken from the records of the Scalds of Iceland, which in very early times was subject to Norway or Denmark; and though the reader will not be disposed to think so highly of their veracity as Snorro, yet it appears extraordinary that they should adopt a fiction that derogates from the military honor of their fellow-subjects; of which, from their character and situation, we have reason to suppose they were remarkably tenacious. The most sober historians are apt, as if their own credit was concerned in the case, rather to controvert, than admit any doubtful circumstance relative

to



As down the valley bursts th' impetuous flood,  
'They waste the plain, and roll their course in  
blood.

But like the wave-defying rock, when glide  
Descending waters down its rugged side,  
As o'er his arms the sanguine current flows,  
'The gloomy form of Valdemar arose.  
He checks their rage ; again the war-train'd steed  
He mounts, and Britain's bravest heroes bleed.

See, Urien falls ! descending on his crest  
The ruthless falchion cleaves him to the chest.  
And, but thy burgonet repell'd the blow,  
Hoel ! thy death had graced the haughty foe.  
The keen-edg'd blade th' uplifted buckler rends,  
And loudly thundering on the casque descends,  
There stop'd : advancing swift in close array  
'Th' Armoric knights their guardian shields display

to their country's having being subdued by the superior  
valour of another ; thus Joannes Magnus, who seems not to  
entertain the least doubt of Denmark's having been con-  
quered by Arthur, is unwilling to admit that Sweden, though  
some writers had maintained that opinion, was ever in the  
same predicament. " Non apud me illæ historiæ probabiles  
videntur, quæ asserunt Arthurum Swetiæ Gotiæque imperasse,  
quamvis eas expugnare contendebat."

It cannot after all be denied but that Joannes Magnus, no  
less credulous than his successor appears in many instances to  
have been, might have taken the account from some Icelan-  
dic *Saga*, copied from an old British Romance, and with  
whose origin he was unacquainted.

Around their king : nor long can they withstand  
The Dacian monarch's wide-destroying hand.  
He thro' the brazen wall, resistless hews  
His wasteful way, and death his course pursues.  
'Th' Armoric bands recede ; and to the skies  
Their barbarous foes' exulting shouts arise.

Far different sounds from where the Saxons  
fought,  
Nearer the stream, the light-wing'd breezes  
brought :

Thence the wild voice of uproar pierc'd the ear :  
The hollow groans of death, the shrieks of fear.

And lo ! in shatter'd arms, with blood distain'd,  
Fierce Ida cross'd the field—the spear sustain'd  
His tottering weight : he thus the king address'd,  
'Th' imperfect words in anguish half-suppress'd.

“ Display not here thy unavailing might :  
Behold, where Uther's son consumes the fight.  
On Elva's banks the voice of woe shall rise,  
For low in dust the gallant Cerdic lies :  
And loud laments be heard on Denmark's shore :  
Thy friend, the brave Biorno, is no more.  
Avenge their fate—then, Valdemar, thy name  
Shall stand unrivall'd in the list of fame.  
Father of gods ! unfold thy spacious hall—  
A croud of heroes wait thy awful call.”

He said, and died ; as Valdemar beheld  
The shameful rout, his manly bosom swell'd

With

With more than wonted ardour : how to fly  
 The hero knew not, but he knew to die :  
 And still he hop'd, the valiant scorn despair,  
 From his proud foe the wreath of fame to tear.  
 Thro' yielding ranks his rapid course he bends,  
 And, like the thunder's rattling peal, he sends  
 His voice in bold defiance.    Arthur heard,  
 Couch'd the strong lance, and out-stretch'd buck-  
                   ler rear'd.

In forms ascending thro' the clouded sky,  
 As rolls th' ensanguin'd moon her orb on high,  
 Prefaging ruin ; thus his blood-streak'd shield  
 Uplifted, gleam'd portentous o'er the field.

The sisters dire behold ; th' unequal fight  
 They dread : for still with unabated might  
 Arthur's strong arm the ranks of war confounds,  
 While from the toil-worn monarch's gaping  
                   wounds

Distill'd the crimson tide.—Their quenchless hate  
 To virtue's cause, protracts the warrior's fate.

An insect's form, like that whose rapid wing  
 Plays murmuring round the opening bloom of  
                   spring,

A fiend assum'd ; and in the courser's breast  
 Infix'd a wound : and soon the steed confess  
 'Th' envenom'd plague—while frenzy fired his  
                   brain,

Throbb'd in his heart, and thrill'd thro' every  
                   vein,

He

He bounds away, by rage, by fear impell'd,  
 His force increas'd, his active limbs upheld  
 By spirit not their own. Vexation, grief,  
 And conscious shame distract the furious chief,  
 The spur avails not, nor the guiding rein :  
 The maddning courser pours along the plain.

The Briton swift pursues ; and loud behind  
 His haughty threats come growing on the wind ;  
 And in the hero's breast, the hated sound  
 Than barbed shafts, implants a deadlier wound.

But soon th' insulting foe he hears no more ;  
 Faint and more faint the battle's distant roar  
 Now dies away ; the chief, at close of eve,  
 Th' embowering shades of \* Celidon receive.  
 There stop'd the steed ; and there the raging pest,  
 That madden'd thro' his veins forsook his breast.

\* One of Arthur's victories, is mentioned by our old Historians, as having been won near a wood of this name—† “ Juxta Lincolniam in Silva Celidonis quæ Britannice vocatur Caercoit Celidon.”—It is here only intended to denote a wood in general. Such is said to be the original signification of the old British word *Kaled*, of which *Kaledon* is the plural. Mr. Whitaker, who conjectures that the Celtic language prevailed throughout Europe (see note to B. ii. P. 25.) supposes that Scotland was called Caledonia by the Romans, on account of its extensive forests ; and that Calydon and the famous Calydonian wood in Ætolia, was derived from the same common origin.

† Ran. Higden's Polychronicon, L. 5.

His



His mighty lord unable to sustain,  
The panting heart's tough cordage rent in twain,  
He faints, he falls : without a groan he dies,  
And motionless on earth extended lies.

While the knight with grief-distracted mind  
Refts, by the fountain's mossy brim reclin'd.  
His shield, his batter'd arms the plain bestrew :  
The verdant plain is streak'd with sanguine hue.  
Now bounding from the earth, his glaring eyes  
He upward lifts, and thus attests the skies.

“ O sun ! who, sinking from thy towering  
height,

Hast seen me borne reluctant from the fight ;  
Thou conscious moon ! ye glittering orbs on high,  
That grace her course and gild the glowing sky ;  
Witness this bosom, tho' to flight compell'd,  
With rage indignant, not with terror, swell'd.  
And you, my friends, whom I behold no more,  
My tried associates in the battle's roar,  
Witness, from danger's front I never fled ;  
Where raged the conflict, where the mighty bled,  
Your monarch strove. Your rampart was his  
shield,

His sword, your beacon, shone in glory's field.  
Ah, friends belov'd ! for whom I mourn in vain,  
Whose spirits wander o'er the fatal plain ;  
Or hovering on the breeze around your chief,  
Mark his wild anguish, and partake his grief !

A while

A while your flight to Odin's hall delay ;  
To Thora's ear the mournful tale convey.  
Tell her, by fraud betray'd, not force o'erthrown,  
I fled—that conscious honor is my own.  
That Valdemar, resolv'd his fate to brave,  
Will never sink a coward to the grave :  
But on the Briton,—Vengeance bend thine ear !  
Requite his wrongs, or cease those wrongs to  
bear.

Should I no more to Denmark's coast return,  
Forbid the fair with bootless tears to mourn  
My fate—to her belongs a nobler care ;  
Hjalmar lives to pour the storms of war  
On Britain's coast, t' avenge his fire's disgrace,  
And guard the honors of a martial race.

Thus as he spoke, in spite of manly pride,  
From his swell'd eyes forth gush'd the genial tide.  
Th' endearing joys that crown domestic life,  
The smiling offspring and the faithful wife  
Rise on his soul. Ye haughty sons of fame !  
Whose generous spirits high resolves inflame ;  
When urg'd to arms you quit your darling fair,  
Or tender babes, soft objects of your care ;  
Can stubborn honor then your bosoms steel,  
Or martial pride subdue the pangs ye feel ?  
Ah no ! the sigh suppress'd, the heart-wrung groan,  
Reveals the anguish that you dare not own.

END OF THE FIFTH BOOK.

A R T H U R ;

OR, THE

NORTHERN ENCHANTMENT.

BOOK SIXTH.

## A R G U M E N T.

*A Winter Scene in Lapland, and cavern described, in which two of the Weird Sisters perform their incantations. Urda appears: recommends Hengist to their care; advises them to grant whatever request he should make, and predicts that his sword should be stain'd with royal blood. Hengist awakes from the swoon into which the Blow of Arthur had thrown him. The cave appears changed to a superb hall of exquisite beauty. Hengist expresses his discontent, and charges the Weird Sisters with having deceiv'd him. They urge him to express his desires: He wishes that he was like Arthur, crown'd with honour, and beloved by Inogen. He assumes through their enchantments the form of Arthur, and is convey'd in a chariot formed of clouds to a mountain adjoining to the bower in which Inogen was concealed. The bower and Inogen described. She mistakes Hengist for Arthur, who with difficulty persuades her to quit her retirement. Cador approaches him, and shows a buckler which he had taken from a warrior whom he had slain in single combat. Hengist, knowing that it belonged to his brother, in revenge kills Cador. Inogen's distress—attempts to fly—Hengist obliges her to accompany him. They enter a dark forest. Inogen faints through grief and terror—revives—Hengist endeavours to impose on her by a fictitious story, which she treats with contempt. He proceeds to violence. Valdemar, awakened by the shrieks of Inogen, and supposing Hengist to be Arthur, assaults him—The Demons are alarmed, and interpose—Inogen flies; and the two warriors kill each other.*



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A R T H U R;  
OR, THE  
NORTHERN ENCHANTMENT.

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B O O K S I X T H.

To bleak \* Biarmia's coast, on Fancy's plumes  
Upborne, th' adventrous Muse her flight assumes :  
Where, half the circling year grim darkness  
reigns :—

Save, when thick-glimmering mid th' ethereal  
plains,

Heaven's sparkling fires, or meteor's wide-stretch'd  
blaze,

The scene in horror visible arrays.

The summer, now scarce felt his genial smile,  
Had fled indignant from th' ungrateful soil ;

\* An account is given of this Country by Olaus Magnus.  
L. i. c. i. It is the Eastern or Muscovite part of Lapland.  
Ohthere, the Capt. Cook of the 10th century, calls it Be-  
ormas.

When

When rushing from his polar cavern, borne  
On lowering clouds, aloft his clanging horn  
Fierce Winter blew : the denizens of air,  
A friendly flock, to milder climes repair ;  
Or chirping plaintive on the leafless spray,  
No more with chearful notes salute the day ;  
But swell'd in ruffled plumage, hunger's rage,  
On the red haw, or purpled whort assuage.

The forest bends beneath the weight of snow ;  
And, as at intervals the cold winds blow,  
The glittering shower in wild confusion flies,  
With brightness clothes the plains, while gloom  
          invests the skies.

No longer bursting o'er their rugged mound  
The torrents foam : in crystal fetters bound,  
'They stand erect, like pillars cloth'd with light ;  
And seem to prop the rock's projecting height.

The shivering herds to distant vales repair ;  
And the gaunt wolf, while thro' the depth of air  
Glides the pale moon, her beams in hatred views,  
And her still course with howlings wild pursues :  
Or famine-pinch'd, and sunk his glaring eyes  
In hollow sockets, faintly growls, and dies.

The Weird sisters to a coast so dire,  
Congenial to their souls, at times retire ;  
And view, their only pleasure to destroy,  
The wreck of nature with malignant joy.

There

There, a vast cave, unknown to mortal eyes,  
Deep-buried in a pathless forest lies :  
Huge icicles, impending from the height  
Of beetling cliffs, ting'd with transparent light,  
Like polish'd spears revers'd, its jaws surround,  
And shoot their many-colour'd rays around.  
But darkness reign'd within ; save when retir'd,  
With quenchless hatred to mankind inspir'd,  
'The sisters meet ; then mix'd with vap'rous gloom  
Flames bursting thro' the central point, illumine  
'The dismal cavern ; while from realms profound  
Spirits unblest arise, and wheel around  
In mystic dance. There now in orgies dire,  
'Gainst Britain's prince to wreak their ruthless ire,  
Valdandi, Skulda join—can man proclaim  
Th' unhallow'd rite—"the deed without a name."  
The deed, which startles e'en the fiends of night,  
At which, if acted in day's sacred light,  
The sun, with horror struck, had backward fled,  
Or veil'd in dark'ning clouds his blazing head.

Still from the Demons, by their potent spell  
Controll'd, dark words of doubtful import fell,  
Unpleasing to their ears : in wild despair  
They beat their breasts, and rend their snaky hair ;  
Draw from their mangled sides the gushing blood,  
And sprinkle o'er the flame the purple flood ;

And

And whilst they brave the power who rules the  
    skies,

Invoke their kindred fiends with fiercer cries.  
Earth shakes--more black the circling vapour flows,  
And the red flame with keener radiance glows.

“Sleeps vengeance then, ye foes of baleful night,  
Exclaims fierce Urda, by the lurid light  
Dimly descried;—Oh shame, oh dire disgrace!  
Shall we be baffled by man’s puny race?  
Say, have I weav’d in fate’s mysterious loom  
The web of Hengist’s life, and stamp’d his doom  
In vain? No, yet again our knight renown’d  
Shall rise, shall triumph, and his foes confound.  
Spirits of night! reception due prepare:  
Take him, my sisters, to your guardian care.  
His former strength renew; and thro’ his soul  
Bid the swell’d tides of rage, and vengeance roll.  
Whate’er the impulse of his mind inspires,  
Regard, nor counteract his wild desires;  
But, whilst his breast with high-wrought fury  
    glows,

Hurl him, like heaven’s red bolt, to blast our foes.  
I breathe the scent of carnage! death pursues  
His course, and royal blood his steel embrues!  
Visions of keen delight! why interpose  
These hated clouds, and on the prospect close?  
Sisters rejoice! behold, enough is known—  
Fate aids our will—destruction is our own!”

“Receive



“Receive your charge.”—This said, the swift  
enshronds

Her form of terror mid encircling clouds,  
And rushing forward on the howling blast;  
The groaning forest trembled as she past.

Stretch'd on his couch the Saxon monarch lies;  
The shades of darkness swim before his eyes.  
His feeble pulse, his quick, disorder'd breath,  
Appear the omens of approaching death.  
But ah! not yet must Hengist fall—the power  
Of magic charms prolongs life's transient hour.  
Again with vital heat his bosom glows,  
And thro' his veins the genial current flows.

Awaking from his death-like swoon, his eyes  
He wildly casts around him; whilst arise  
Far different scenes before his wond'ring view,  
From those the Muse so late in terror drew.  
The hags abhorr'd, and all the forms of dread,  
The livid flames, and dusky smoke was fled.  
The dismal cave a lovelier form assum'd;—  
A stately hall with pendant lamps illum'd.  
From every side reflected lustre shines,  
That mocks the splendor of Golconda's mines.  
The sapphire's blue, and topaz' golden gleams,  
The ruby's glow, the crystal's liquid beams,  
Mix'd with the diamond's varied rays, unite  
In glittering wreaths to captivate the sight.

A marble

A marble pillar huge, of snow-white hue,  
The centre graced, and o'er the ceiling threw  
Its branches wide: the pictur'd forms between,  
Of vanquish'd chiefs, and conq'ring knights were  
seen:

And by them stood fair maids, their valour's prize,  
With plausive smiles, and love-illumin'd eyes.

Around his couch, to fight a beauteous band  
Of gentle youths, attending spirits stand.  
With notes harmonious now they sooth his ear;  
And now his soul with air-form'd visions cheer.

But tho', whate'er could give to trouble ease;  
Whate'er the wish could form, or fancy please,  
Was there;—no joy can gloomy Hengist find;  
His late disgrace weighs heavy on his mind.  
Nor visionary scenes, nor lofty strain,  
Nor splendid banquet, nor obsequious train,  
Can pleasure yield; but as his might returns,  
His soul with doubled indignation burns:  
And the bright forms of hero's conquest-crown'd,  
Whom captiv'd kings, and lovely maids surround,  
As will'd the fraudulent sisters, in his heart  
Implant more deeply envy's venom'd dart.

“Immortal Goddesses! \* whose guardian power,  
In wrath he cries, o'er-watch'd my natal hour,  
Inspir'd

\* Starchaterus, who has been already quoted, seems to allude to the influence the fatal sisters were supposed to possess at the birth of infants in the following lines.

Inspir'd my soul, my arm with vigour strung,  
 When echoing fields with shouts discordant rung,  
 And havoc reign'd, is this your guardian aid?  
 'The fairest kingdom, and the brightest maid  
 Does Hengist thus obtain? what boots the mail  
 Impassive, if in arms, and love I fail?  
 'Thro' you, on Lignon's Isle the proffer'd fight  
 I shunn'd; thro' you am deem'd a recreant knight.  
 Perish the thought! a life preserv'd with shame  
 My soul disdains—Be Hengist's death, or fame!"

Before his view, earth trembling wide around,  
 Valdandi, Skulda, thro' the rifted ground,  
 Arising sudden, thus the knight addrest:  
 "Unfold the secret wishes of thy breast,  
 Nor dread refusal." With collected mind  
 Firm and undaunted thus the king rejoind.  
 "Ye awful powers, to whom I bend my knee,  
 Aught but the wretch he is, would Hengist be.  
 Would be as Arthur is, renown'd to fame,  
 And lov'd like him by Britain's fairest dame—  
 But ah, how vain the thought!" "The thought  
 enjoy!

We grant thy darling wish!—they swift reply;  
 In semblance of his radiant arms to shine;  
 'T'assume his mien, his look, his voice, be thine.

At mihi, si recolo, nascenti FATA dedere  
 Bella sequi, belloque mori, miscere tumultu,  
 Invigilare armis, vitam exercere cruentam.

Bart. L. 3. C. 1.

L

To

To guide thy course to those enchanted bowers  
That hold conceal'd the beauteous maid, is ours ;  
But that alone—If thou successful prove,  
She quit her dwelling, and repay thy love,  
Then Odin's race shall sway the British throne—  
But know, the danger's great, th'event unknown.  
Futurity's dark vapours intervene,  
Elude our sight, and blot the coming scene."

" Tho' Danger in her direst form arise,  
I mock her terrors, and her frowns despise,  
He swift return'd : let Inogen be mine,  
And to the winds I every doubt resign."

Around his head their ebony wands on high  
The sisters wave, and loudly thus reply.

" Such radiant arms, redoubted chief ! behold,  
As Britain's champion wears, thy form enfold ;  
Thy voice, thy features his—nor shall the charm  
Be broke, till Hengist's will its power disarm."

His alter'd mien, as now the Saxon knight  
Perceives, his bosom glows with fierce delight.  
The maid complacent to his suit he views,  
And Arthur's blade his vengeful blade embrues.

A cloud-form'd car, impatient of delay,  
He mounts : Valdandi steers its rapid way.  
O'er gloomy woods and snow-clad plains they  
soar,

Whilst loud around the winds tempestuous roar.  
Beneath



Beneath their feet conflicting clouds they spy,  
 Whence thunder bursts, and forked lightnings fly.  
 Now in a sea of billowy vapours tost,  
 They urge their course, in tenfold darkness lost :  
 Again they rush amid the blaze of light,  
 Woods, vales, and mountains burst upon their  
                   fight.

No time is theirs to mark each lovely view,  
 Still varying, as the chariot onward flew :  
 Wild, indistinct, as in the dreams of rest,  
 When wayward Fancy's power usurps the breast.  
 Now o'er the foaming main their way they steer ;  
 The billows ting'd with trembling light appear.  
 And now the rocks of Albion meet their eyes,  
 As on th' horizon's verge grey mists arise.  
 To Rawran's summit they their course pursue ;  
 Thence, faint-descried, the distant bower they  
                   view.

Valdandi there the gloomy warrior leaves ;  
 Her last commands impatient he receives ;  
 A milk-white steed, by magic fram'd, bestrides ;  
 And t'ward the lone abode its foot-steps guides.

Seat of delight, in nature's charms array'd,  
 And thou, far lovelier, Britain's peerless maid !  
 Ah, wherefore has the Muse denied so long  
 To you, in horrors lost, the votive song ?

A wide-extended mound the beauteous scene  
 Incircles, smiling with perpetual green :

O'er which, in close array on either side,  
Huge, moss-crown'd oaks, towering in leafy  
    pride,

Their intermingled branches weave on high,  
And their thick gloom excludes day's garish eye.

Oft as beneath their shade deep-musing stray'd,  
At night, or dewy eve, the British maid,  
When the bright moon adorn'd heaven's spangled  
    plain,

Before her sight arose the fairy train,  
In white plum'd helmets, and vests of splendid hue,  
Cloud-form'd, and deck'd with quivering gems of  
    dew.

And while, to crown the revels of the night,  
Obedient glow-worms lend their living light,  
Their sweet-toned lyres the little minstrels sweep,  
And the charm'd winds in placid silence sleep.  
A sprightly band, accordant to the sound,  
With measur'd steps in circles print the ground.  
At blush of morn they vanish from the view,  
And night's pale empress wrapt in shades pursue.

E'en in these latter days, by forest green,  
The swain benighted oft their sports has seen.  
Thus potent fancy can the sense enchain,  
Form, and embody forth her airy train  
In simplest minds, and give to vacant eyes,  
What sterner Wisdom to her sons denies,

Impressions

Impressions sweet and strange ! alike her sway  
Th' inventive bard, and humble swain obey.  
Yet we in one, their lot so different, find  
The daring efforts of the glowing mind,  
That "scales invention's heaven." While censure  
vain

And keen derision mock th' unletter'd swain,  
Tho' to his view ideal forms arise :  
And Fancy gilds them with her brightest dyes !  
Nature within her various charms combin'd  
To please the sight and soothe th' enraptur'd mind.  
Eternal spring in all its beauty reigns,  
And the sun smiles amid his sapphire plains ;  
Or gleams thro' fleeting clouds less fiercely bright,  
And decks their curling skirts with softened light.  
No hail, no snow descends ; no storms arise :  
No thunder shakes, nor lightning fires the skies.  
Sweet sing the birds inspir'd with joy and love,  
And harmony resounds from every grove.  
The groves themselves the richest livery wear,  
Grac'd with the product of the circling year.  
With ceaseless verdure, fragrant blossoms crown'd,  
And charg'd with fruitage bending to the ground.  
Ambrosial flowers, beneath, unnumber'd spring,  
And load with rich perfume the zephyr's wing.  
O'er marble rocks here gushing torrents flow,  
Array'd in light, and foam and roar below :

There

There softly murmur thro' the valley green,  
Or shine remote the scatter'd groves between.  
'Twas beauteous all! with such perfection wrought,  
Design seem'd nature—nature's happiest thought.

Here dwelt the British maid, in whom combin'd

The loveliest features, and the purest mind.  
White were her robes—but whiter than the vest.  
Her ivory neck, and veil-enshrouded breast.  
Skirted with light in summer's sultry day,  
As waving vapours round the mountain play,  
Her glittering tresses wanton'd on the wind.  
Around her brow a golden braid entwin'd :  
And, intermix'd the glittering threads between,  
Rubies, and orient pearl, and emerald green,  
By mimic art the lily pale express,  
And rose-bud bursting, thro' its verdant vest.  
Her lovely cheeks disclos'd the blush of morn ;  
Like stars that heaven's unclouded brow adorn,  
Her eyes appear'd : yet mild and soft their beam,  
As light reflected in the crystal stream.

The Artist's skill, the Bard's unequal lay,  
In vain to paint perfection's form essay.  
In vain her charms the feeble Muse would trace,  
Whose look was beauty, and whose gesture grace.

Where round an aged oak's indented rind  
Its verdant wreath the creeping ivy twin'd ;

Amid



Amid whose boughs the vine dependent hung  
Her purple clusters, and the woodbine flung  
Her fragrant foliage, waving in the air,  
Sate on a moss-clad couch the pensive fair.  
Thither she oft retir'd ; thence lov'd to spy  
Streams, forests, vales ; and fading to the eye  
The mountain's distant summits—When confin'd,  
How sweetly longs to rove th' excursive mind !

Oh liberty ! thy precious smiles can cheer  
The barren heath, and howling wild endear.  
The wretch, on whom thy beam no longer shines,  
'Mid pleasure sickens, and in plenty pines.  
No joys luxurious the wild Arabs need ;  
Their wealth, the missive lance and bounding  
steed.

Fearless they scour along the dreary waste,  
Nor heed the whirling sands, and sultry blast.  
Would they, who mid the scenes of danger sport,  
Prefer the tasteless pleasures of a court ?  
Exchange the hide-form'd couch for beds of down,  
And own the terrors of a monarch's frown,  
To share his grandeur ? No, they higher prize  
Those heart-felt blessings Liberty supplies.  
To think, speak, act, by no harsh laws confin'd,  
Is theirs—the charter of the free-born mind !  
Thirst gives a flavour to the crystal spring,  
More sweet than crowns the nectar of a king :

And

And toil adds relish to the frugal meal,  
A relish, pamper'd pomp can never feel.

As deeply-musing thus, while grief devours  
Her heart, she wears away the mournful hours :  
And now her eyes the fleeting clouds pursue,  
Seeming to mark their course, and varying hue ;  
Or bend intent upon the sylvan scene,  
The dusky forest, and the valley green :  
Not there alas, her thoughts ! the mental light  
Unfolds far different objects to her sight.  
She sighs, as memory the past displays ;  
But soon sweet hope in glowing tints arrays  
The coming scene ; then doubt her bosom rends,  
And from her eyes the pearly shower descends.  
The air-form'd fabric Fear's chill hand destroys,  
And sudden fade her visionary joys.

But hark ! the clang of arms assails her ears—  
A champion on the distant glade appears.  
What transport seiz'd her as he nearer drew,  
And Arthur's much-lov'd form approach'd her  
view.

“ Lord of my heart ! th' unconscious virgin  
cries,

Whose presence fills my soul with glad surprize ;  
Oh say, has heaven my prayer propitious heard ?  
The daily prayer for Britain's weal prefer'd—  
Does fell Contention cease her angry roar,  
And Peace returning bless my native shore ?”

“ Hail

“ Hail maid ador’d ! the fraudulent knight re-  
join’d,

Long has my troubled soul in absence pin’d.  
But now each anxious doubt and sorrow flies ;  
Love’s ardent suit no more thy fire denies.  
By his commands I come, to guide thy way,  
Where Britain’s sons in battailous array  
Expect their prince ; and in his fair one’s fight  
Have vow’d to prove the greatness of their might.  
Thus Beauty’s beam shall kindle valor’s flame ;  
Her smiles give conquest, and her praise be fame !”

“ No farther urge the suit, she mild replies,  
Which Inogen reluctantly denies.  
My soul with joy would all thy troubles bear,  
Partake thy toils, and every danger share ;  
Alas, how vain the thought ! it cannot be,  
Till Merlin’s voice permits me to be free.”

“ Her Arthur’s words can Inogen mistrust ?  
He swift rejoins : Oh cruel and unjust !  
Tho’ forc’d thy filial duty to approve,  
Th’ unkind suspicion of my constant love,  
And yet unquestion’d Faith too deeply wounds  
My tortur’d breast, and every sense confounds.  
Thy father calls thee hence—’tis his behest—  
But ah ! I urge in vain my fond request :—  
Arthur is lov’d no more !” With streaming eyes  
He spoke ; his voice seem’d choak’d with bursting  
sighs.

In

In doubt and terror lost, the fair one hears;  
While in her radiant eyes the starting tears  
Stand trembling; so before the breeze of morn  
The dew-drop quivers on the pointed thorn.

As some pellucid current that divides  
The flower-embroider'd valley, while it glides  
By the pale lily, or the blushing rose,  
Now shines in whiteness, now with crimson glows;  
Thus varying colours clothe the virgin's cheek,  
And the strong conflict of her soul bespeak.  
Can she to Arthur's suit regardless prove?  
Can she suspect the tender voice of love?  
But then, the promise to her awful fire—  
No, death's less dreadful than a father's ire!

The knight, while thus conflicting passions  
tear

Her soul, attentive marks the wavering fair,  
And eager thus. "Ah why this coldness shown  
To him, whose heart is fix'd on thee alone?  
'Time was, when Inogen held Arthur dear;  
And deem'd his passion pure, his soul sincere.  
'Tis past! and since thy heart's no longer mine,  
Soon shall this beating bosom cease to pine.  
By Merlin warn'd, I know that danger's nigh;  
Be safety thine, and I with pleasure die.  
Alas! they come—behold thy ruthless foes!  
Hence, on this faithful steed, whilst I oppose

Their



Their rage ; and when my death shall reach thy  
ear,

Let kind remembrance drop one tender tear.  
Pity may grant the boon, though love denies ;  
And Britain's ill-starr'd prince contented dies !”

The trembling virgin gazing wild around,  
With steel-clad squadrons views the mountains  
crown'd ;

Hears, indistinct, the din of arms ascend,  
As t'ward the vale their rapid course they bend ;  
And at their near approach, beholds on high,  
The Saxon banners waving in the sky.

Her seeming danger, her suspected love,  
Her dread of Arthur's fall, too weighty prove  
For Reason's weak controul. “ Alas ! she said,  
Why wrongs my lord, his ever-constant maid  
With doubts injurious ? I am only thine—  
To thee, my friend, my father, I resign  
My future fate : with thee resolv'd to share  
All perils, trusting to thy guardian care.”

She said, and left the bower : the knight in  
haste

Th' incautious virgin on his courser plac'd :  
And, where he deem'd the Saxon forces lay,  
O'er the green champain pressed his eager way.

Ye beauteous maids, who Britain's coast adorn,  
Warr'd by the luckless fair, reject with scorn

The

The fraudulent vow, th' insidious plea, addrest  
To counteract a father's wife behest :  
Tho' seemingly severe, 'tis yours to know,  
From love parental it alone could flow.  
Whoe'er by specious shews, and kind pretence,  
Would warp your pliant minds from duty's sense,  
Disdain—what falshood plans, in ruin ends ;  
No foes more dangerous than pretended friends.

As on they journey, converse sweet beguiles  
The fleeting hours, while conscious joy with  
smiles

Illumes the features of the gentle maid :  
No foe mistrusting, of no ills afraid.

Now the bright clouds, that to the setting ray,  
Their gorgeous robes in varied tints display,  
By flow degrees assume a darker hue :  
And o'er the valley pours the silent dew.

Before them, lo! a youthful knight appears;  
At first his lance in bold defiance rears;  
But, as the well-known armour he descries,  
His spear he drops, and thus in transport cries.

“ Hail, my lov'd lord ! long may you live to  
fame

Renown'd, and blest with Britain's fairest dame.  
But late I heard on \* Gwineth's farthest coast,  
That, led by Lancelot, our valiant host  
Prepar'd to meet the foe. With eager speed  
To join the chief, I spurr'd my rapid steed,

\* North-Walcs.

For ne'er, I trust, thy Cador shall disgrace  
The lineal honours of a noble race.  
This morn, a Saxon knight, with words of pride,  
On yonder heath my force in arms defied.  
Nor feeble was his arm, but fortune crown'd  
My cause: the warrior, breathless, prest the  
ground."

"What knight, what warrior!" while his  
bosom burns

With fury ill-conceal'd, the king returns.

"Behold this buckler!" Grief and wild sur-  
prise,

As on the well-known shield he fix'd his eyes,  
Possess the gloomy Saxon: oft of yore  
In scenes of death the splendid targe he bore.  
Its boss was polish'd steel, the field of gold,  
And round its marge a golden serpent roll'd.  
To Ella this, a brother dearly lov'd,  
When first the youth his might in battle prov'd,  
He gave: and while he led his martial band  
To Britain, left him in his native land  
The substitute of power: but he disdain'd  
A peaceful life, when glory could be gain'd  
By deeds of bold emprise. He came, he fought,  
He bravely fell; and met the death he fought.  
Thus fleets the warrior's transient life away,  
A troubled dream:—bleak winter's stormy day.  
Through

Through scowling clouds awhile dim radiance  
gleams ;

Then sudden darkness veils the struggling beams.

In Hengist's breast while flames of vengeance  
rise,

As lightning kindles in the stormy skies,

“ Receive thy valor's meed !” he furious said,

And to the hilt entheath'd his deadly blade

In Cador's generous breast.—Unhappy fair !

What then thy thoughts, thy grief, thy wild despair !

To view the gentle youth, thy soul approv'd,

Slain by the fury of thy best lov'd !

To fly, she strives, by heartfelt fear impell'd ;

The furious knight her fond attempt with-held :

And forward, as he shook the loosen'd rein,

Bounded th' impetuous steed ; and backward roll'd  
the plain.

Soon deeper terrors agonise her breast :

Night gathers round ; ascending mists invest

The lowly dell in robes of pallid hue :

But darkness o'er the sky her mantle threw.

If aught could more her tortur'd mind dismay,

'Thro' dismal woods they now pursu'd their way,

Where prowling wolves alone the silence broke,

And night-owls screeching from the blasted oak ;

Or, at long intervals, the bloated toad

Harsh-croaking from the root, its dank abode.

Nor long could she these various scenes of dread  
Sustain : her dim eyes closed, her senses fled.

E'en



E'en the stern knight, revolving in his mind  
The barbarous act, his soul to grief resign'd.  
But ah ! not such as from contrition springs,  
Then conscious guilt the heart repentant wrings ;  
Or, as when meek Affliction, self-supprest,  
Checks the sad sigh that swells her troubled  
    breast.

But such, as feels the tyrant of the wood,  
Compell'd to quit th' untasted feast of blood  
By daring huntsmen : from the prostrate prey,  
He bends reluctant to the cave his way.  
His teeth he grinds ; flames sparkle from his eyes,  
And the wide forest to his roar replies.

    Her death-cold hand he feels ; her voice sup-  
    prest,  
He marks ; and mingled passions swell his breast.  
While from his lips, as rage or grief inspire,  
Burst loud laments, and execrations dire.

    High o'er the trees the moon began to tower,  
And to his view disclos'd a shady bower,  
By which, a gurgling rill, as crystal bright,  
Shone like a mirror to the eye of night.  
Dismounting there, with careful haste he laid  
On the green turf the scarcely-breathing maid,  
And quick unclasp'd the polish'd helm to bring  
The cooling water from the limpid spring :  
Which, o'er her face that sham'd the lily's hue,  
With trembling hand he lightly sprinkling threw.

At

At length the fair reviv'd, and darting round  
Her wildly-glancing eyes; with sudden bound  
Up-sprung from earth, the knight her hand detain'd,

And thus in seeming agony complain'd.

“ Loveliest, and best-belov'd, what means this  
ire ?

Can Arthur's presence causeless dread inspire ?  
Or falls the tender tear for Cadbor ? know,  
Not erring wrath, but justice dealt the blow.  
The golden buckler to a friend most true  
Belong'd : that friend th' insidious traitor slew.  
Soon as the tale I heard, my soul decreed,  
To take due vengeance for the ruthless deed.  
But ah ! far worse : with Britain's foes combin'd,  
To seize my fair th' aspiring youth design'd ;  
Then yield her charms the hated Saxon's prey,  
And hold the land in tributary sway,”

“ Cease, she return'd, and strive no more to  
blind

With error's thin-wove veil my easy mind.  
Thy specious tale too fondly I believ'd ;  
But Inogen can be no more deceiv'd.  
I deem'd thy words could flow from truth alone ;  
That Arthur's breast was virtue's hallow'd throne.  
Ah ! wherefore swerve thy steps from honor's  
road,  
To slaughter's blood-stain'd path, and tangled  
maze of fraud ?”

He

He calls attesting heaven; he weeps, he sighs,  
And every art of soft persuasion tries.

But, as he marks his fraudulent efforts vain,  
His vows with horror, love with fix'd disdain  
Repaid; his black intent no more suppress,  
In all its hateful colours glar'd confess  
The fiend-like mind. Her trembling hand he  
grasps,

In strict embrace the maid reluctant clasps;  
And, as th' habergeon, from his breast unbound,  
Helm, shield, and ponderous buckler press the  
ground.

"Ill suit those arms, the blissful hour, he cries,  
When beauty yields, the warrior's dearest prize!"

Aloud, her voice, the hapless virgin rears;  
On heaven she calls, and heaven in pity hears.  
Not distant far, and sunk in soft repose,  
The toil-worn Dane found refuge from his woes.  
At length awaken'd by the shrieking fair,  
(Affliction ever claim'd his generous care)  
His faithful sword, disdainingly cold delay,  
He grasp'd, and t'ward them bent his eager way.

The moon, that still in chequer'd light array'd  
The dusky forest, to his view display'd  
The gleam of arms, and gave him power to trace  
The well-known lineaments of Arthur's face.  
Faint and exhausted, as the fair implor'd  
The tender pity of her ruthless lord,

M

So

So rashly deem'd, forth from the covert broke  
Stern Valdemar, and thus indignant spoke :

\* " Oh stain to knighthood, and thy country's  
shame,

May black oblivion henceforth veil thy name !"  
'Thro' night's dim shadows gleam'd the lifted  
sword,

And swift his weighty blade the Saxon lord  
Unsheath'd—thick darkness overcast the sky ;  
'The thunder roll'd in rattling peals on high.  
Flash'd on each chief the lightning's vivid hue,  
Athwart, around, night's fable spectres flew.  
'Their shrieks re-echoed thro' the murky air :  
" Sons of the North, your causeless rage forbear !  
Oh ! let not Odin's race their swords distain  
In kindred blood, and fate forewarn in vain !"

'Thro' error blinded, and impetuous ire,  
The crash of elements, presages dire,  
They hear regardless ; parley they despise ;  
Nor life, nor victory, but vengeance prize.

Could buckler, helm of proof, or triple mail  
'Gainst skill, and matchless force like theirs, avail !  
'How then can they such blows defenceless bear,  
Whose weight had crush'd th' embattled ranks of  
war ?

\* An insult offered to a lady in the romantic ages was  
considered as the most atrocious crime.



The combat's o'er—the shrieks of death re-  
found ;

The tempest rolls away ; and on the ground  
Brave Valdemar lies breathless ; by his side  
Stern Hengist sinking, thus in fury cried.

“ Such agonising pangs as these I feel,  
Keen as the searchings of this deadly steel,  
Ye hags of darkness, be it yours to know  
In Nifheim's gloomy depth, th' abode of woe !—  
Ha ! it is thou, whose erring hand destroys  
My life, and blasts my hope of promis'd joys ?”  
(For now the moon her splendid course resum'd,  
And her bright train th' ethereal arch illum'd,)  
“ But 'tis enough ! thy death's, thy folly's meed :  
Not meanly foil'd, nor unreveng'd, I bleed.  
High be my seat in Odin's lofty hall !  
No warrior lives, to boast of Hengist's fall.”  
On Valdemar's deep wounds he bends his eyes  
With joy malignant—\* grimly smiles and dies.

When

\* Olaus Magnus concludes his account of the military exercises of the old Scandinavians in the following manner :  
“ Tales erant, ut eis nullus labor insolitus, nullus locus asper, aut arduus erat, non armatus hostis formidolosus, non mors ipsa terrorem eis incutere valuit ; adeo ut quandoque in duello morientes soluto in risum ore per summam doloris dissimulationem spiritum reddiderint.” L. 15. C. 16. Quintus Curtius relates (L. 7. C. 10.) that Alexander, having condemned to death some Sogdian prisoners, the inhabitants of a

When Inogen the Danish monarch view'd  
Advance, loud-threat'ning, from the dusky wood,  
That

country adjacent to antient Scythia, was surpris'd at their testifying great joy by dancing and singing, and demanded the reason of it. They inform'd him that to perish by the ignoble (the same sentiment prevail'd among the Goths) was disgraceful; but to be restored to their forefathers by so illustrious a conqueror, caus'd them to celebrate their fate by dancing, and *singing* their *customary* songs. This peculiar mode of defying or welcoming death, strongly resembles the ferocious contempt which the North-American Indians display at its approach. Many instances of the kind are given by Bartholine. He mentions (L. 1. C. 5.) a Danish princess, who, though her husband was slain before her face, and her son transfix'd with spears, neither grew pale at the approach of death, nor chang'd the serenity of her countenance; but with her last breath resolutely declar'd, that the shedding her blood should cause the destruction of her enemies. A warrior being taken prisoner, and offer'd his liberty, reject'd it; but gratefully acknowledg'd his enemy's generous indulgence, in permitting him, according to his request, to be burnt alive with some of his particular friends. Another endures, unmoved, the sharpest torments; answers with great composure his enemies' interrogatories, and talks with the same chearfulness as if sitting at a banquet. Another, while his intestines were pulling out, is said not to have utter'd a groan. Bartholine quotes in a different chapter (L. 1. C. 10.) the epicedium which he sung, while suffering the most grievous torments. It is much in the same style with Lodbroc's well-known ode, and like that, in several places, greatly resembles the death-song of a Canadian savage. It appears probable,

That instant, from th' embrace of Hengist freed,  
She burst away, and terror wing'd her speed.

Thus, in the falcon's ruthless talons borne,  
The gentle lark, sweet minstrel of the morn,  
Beholds the eagle, from his airy height,  
With sounding wings precipitate his flight :

probable, that the † Norwegians in the tenth and eleventh centuries discovered that part of America, and made frequent voyages to it. To suppose that so peculiar a mode of setting death and their enemies' cruelty at defiance, originated from those adventurers who settled there, and in process of time, might have been incorporated with the original inhabitants, would be too hazardous a conjecture. A similarity between the customs of barbarous nations, is no proof of their being descended from the same race of people; yet where the resemblance is singular and striking, as in the above and following instance, it may not appear unworthy notice, though no particular inference can be drawn from it. The old Scythians, according to Herodotus (L. 4.) made cups of their enemies' skulls, and carried their *scalps* about them, as marks of their valour, and emblems of victory. It is well known, that the Indians in North America consider the latter in the same light. The Goths, who are generally allowed to be descended from the ancient Scythians, being no less *polished* than they were, and somewhat more so than the Canadian nations now are, neglected the scalps of their enemies, but fashioned, like their ancestors, their skulls into cups, as more durable and elegant trophies of their military renown.

† Vide Mallet's Hist. of Denmark, v. I. c. II.

As upwards bends her foe his wondring eyes,  
Freed from his grasp, uncertain where she flies,  
She bounds away :—thus thro' the forest prest  
The fair with trembling heart and panting breast.  
But leave we there the luckless maid to stray :  
Britain's brave prince demands the devious lay.

END OF BOOK SIXTH.



A R T H U R;

OR, THE

NORTHERN ENCHANTMENT.

BOOK SEVENTH.

## A R G U M E N T.

*ARTHUR* takes shelter at the approach of night in a cottage.—Its inhabitants described. *Morning*—*Arthur* proceeds to the wood in pursuit of *Valdemar*. Meets *Gradoc*; who informs him of his and *Lionel's* victory over the Saxons, and of the death of *Guendolen*. They leave the forest, and see *Ellena* on a heath adjoining to it. She acquaints *Arthur* of *Inogen's* having quitted the enchanted bower with an unknown knight; of the weird sisters' and demons' exultation on the occasion; of her swooning with horror at their appearance, and finding herself on a lonely heath, and restored to life by the care of an old shepherd. He approaches; says that in all probability he had seen *Inogen* the preceding evening; and that the knight who accompanied her, had killed another, whose death *Ellena* told him would cause additional grief to *Arthur*. His lamentation for the supposed infidelity of *Inogen*, and the death of *Cador*. Displeased with *Gradoc*, pursues the course he supposed *Inogen* to have taken. Her flight described—worn out with fatigue, she reposes herself in a little grove on the summit of a hill. *Hacon* and his bards come to the same place in order to inter *Sveno*. On *Inogen's* informing them who she is, *Hacon* orders his bards to slay her in revenge to *Arthur*, and to please the manes of his son. A young knight preserves her, and kills her enemies: is grievously wounded himself. While *Inogen* is lamenting his fate, and endeavouring to assist him, *Arthur* approaches, charges her with falsehood, and with causing the death of *Cador*. She recriminates. *Arthur* renounces his love, and is going to leave her. *Merlin* appears, and informs them of the mistake they laboured under; and that the weird sisters instead of counteracting by their enchantments, as they proposed to do, the decrees of fate, had brought about, through their interference, what *Arthur* himself could never have effected in his favour. That they should never more molest him; but in future be confined to darkness amid the caverns of *Hecla*. On observing that *Inogen* and *Arthur* express compassion for the knight, whom they supposed to have been slain by *Hacon*: he shows him to be *Iwar*, and cures his wounds by virtue of his magic wand. Promises *Inogen* to *Arthur*, and, with some advice to him, concludes the Poem.

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A R T H U R;  
OR, THE  
NORTHERN ENCHANTMENT.

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B O O K   S E V E N T H.

ARTHUR who found pursuit was vain (the  
muse

\* Again her long-forfaken tale renews)  
Resolv'd, when morn her lucid brow unveil'd,  
To pierce the forest that his foe conceal'd:  
For now repose, with toil incessant tir'd,  
Alike the knight, and panting steed requir'd.

Deep in a vale, adjacent to the wood,  
A humble dome, a straw-roof'd cottage stood;  
There dwelt a peasant and his gentle wife—  
Unknown to sorrow flow'd their peaceful life:  
In rural cares their fleeting hours were spent;  
Their labour pleasure, and their wealth content.

\* Book V. p. 134.

While

While sitting at their frugal eve's repast,  
And by their side their prattling children placed,  
Sudden, the trampling feed, the clash of arms,  
With anxious fears their trembling hearts alarms.  
These fears, the warrior's gentle words dispel ;  
“ Ye peaceful natives of the lowly dell,  
On whom I call, no act of fury dread :  
The storm of danger o'er the peasant's shed  
Innocuous rolls—nor I a Saxon chief :  
A Briton from a Briton claims relief ;  
A friendly shelter, till the shades of night  
Disperse before the morning's cheerful light.”

'The door unbarr'd in martial pomp array'd,  
Before their view the warrior stood display'd.  
What reverential awe their souls possess !  
Their eyes fix'd steadfast on their god-like guest.

Not mighty \* Thor, in Runic rhymes renown'd,  
From realms of frost returning conquest-crown'd,  
When self-instinctive flew his dreadful mace,  
And crush'd beneath its weight the giant race,  
In greater majesty, amid the gods  
Applauding, rose in Odin's bright abodes.

His helm unbrac'd, how mild his features shone !  
Soft as the radiance of the setting sun.

\* Thor was the Gothic Hercules, and supposed to have made frequent incursions into the territories of the giants and evil genii. See the Udda. c. 22.



The children, frightned at the armour's blaze,  
Cling round the mother, and in terror gaze.

While smiles benignant brightened o'er his face,  
He clasp'd their tender hands with gentle grace,  
And thus addrest them: "Every fear remove,  
Ye lovely objects of connubial love!  
Curst be the wretch who wrongs your tender years,  
And fills the harmless shepherd's eye with tears."  
Then paused.—"Oh, thus may I be blest," he  
cried,

And deeply mus'd on Inogen, and sigh'd.

A tender sigh from sweet affection sprung,  
Not from th' impassion'd breast in anguish wrung,  
For soon he deem'd, the fair, his labours o'er,  
Would crown with smiles of joy the peaceful  
hour.

But ah! how oft, when bright the morning shines,  
Loud roars the tempest ere the sun declines.

What ills unseen the mortal race annoy?  
How frequent falls th' untasted cup of joy,  
Dash'd from our lip? Alas, to thee we owe,  
By contrast dire, the bitterest pangs of woe:  
Vain, vain Security! as down thy tide,  
In stately pomp the barks triumphant glide;  
And the wish'd shore arises full to view,  
In colours trick'd that mock the rainbow's hue:  
Already Fancy treads the promis'd coast,  
Doubt flies, and Hope in certainty seems lost;

But

But Disappointment's clouded form behind  
Malignant scowls, and bids the adverse wind  
In all its fury rage. Death's dreadful form  
Rides on the wave, and Terror swells the storm!

Embolden'd by the hero's words, advance  
The infant pair: oftimes his weighty lance  
They vainly strive to lift, and half-afraid  
Touch the keen edge of his destructive blade.  
Now mid the helm's white plumes their fingers  
flay,

And with its sculptur'd forms delighted play.  
The mother frowns and chides; whilst in her eyes  
Joy conscious springs, and her feign'd wrath belies.

And now the chearful fire is rais'd; the board  
With choicer viands spread: while Britain's lord,  
To each fond child beside him placed, imparts  
The grateful cates, and wins their little hearts.

With added joy the parents' bosoms glow,  
And blessings on their noble guest bestow:  
And form the wish they never felt before,  
That fate had granted them an ampler store  
Of fortune's favours—but the wish how vain!  
Souls fraught with honour idle pomp disdain.  
They mark the efforts of the heart alone;  
And willing minds all other wants atone.

Oh Hospitality, thou power benign!  
Tho' others bow not at thy sacred shrine,

Yet

Yet may'st thou never from this realm depart,  
But find a temple in each British heart !

The prince retires, and tastes the sweet repose,  
That nature on the sons of toil bestows.  
And now the crystal gates of heaven unfold ;  
The purple clouds are edg'd with gleams of gold.  
With sparkling dew the web thin-woven shines,  
That o'er the grass the busy insect twines :  
Or on the buoyant air sublimely borne,  
Floats tremulous before the breeze of morn.  
The lark ascending pours the lengthened strain,  
The lapwing screams along the distant plain.  
The falcon towers aloft on level wings,  
And the gay linnet on the hawthorn sings.  
Their carols echoed from the distant groves,  
The thrush and blackbird hail their feather'd loves.  
The jay, the pie, their notes discordant strain,  
And the lorn stock-doves on their elms complain.

Arthur, arising from the bower of rest,  
Disdaining peaceful ease, his courser prest.  
To heaven the parents' secret prayers arise :  
And the tear trembling in the children's eyes,  
As sad they view their royal guest depart,  
More strongly speaks the feelings of the heart,  
'Than studied eloquence can ever reach  
With all the labour'd pomp, and grace of speech.

The hero mark'd, and softened at the view,  
With accent mild thus kindly bade adieu :

“ Kind

“ Kind cottagers, may never danger rude  
Invade these blissful bowers of solitude !  
But as thro’ life’s extended path you stray,  
Peace guide your steps, and pleasure smooth your  
way !

Such joys as suit your gentle spirits prove,  
Content unenvied, and unchanging love.”

And now the dusky forest he pervades,  
Bewilder’d in its labyrinth of shades.  
Oftimes aloud on Valdemar he cries ;  
To mortal combat Valdemar defies.  
Then list’ning, stops his course : no voice replied ;  
Nor sound was heard, save when the breezes sigh’d  
Thro’ quivering leaves ; or as they died away,  
The distant stream’s low murmurs—No delay  
His keen impatience brooks : in wrathful mood  
He shakes the reins, and threads the mazy wood.

At length approach’d a knight of martial mien :  
Mix’d with the laurel’s victor-wreath was seen  
The cypress branch dark-weaving o’er his head :  
While bars of fable iron thick bespread  
His splendid armour. Cradoc thus design’d  
To express the mix’d emotions of his mind.

The youth began: Tho’ envious fate denied  
To share thy matchless fame by Deva’s side,  
Yet of thy friend’s renown can Avon tell,  
Beside whose banks the strength of Ullin fell.

Galicia’s



Galicia's sons, and many a British knight,  
We found entrench'd ; but kindling at our sight,  
They call'd aloud to arms ; nor we suppress  
The growing ardour that inflam'd their breast.  
By Avon's Stream, the foes embattled pride  
Appears :—the foes our slender band deride.  
But soon they find, when in his country's cause,  
His vengeful blade the generous Briton draws,  
Nor numbers terrify, nor threats affright,  
But swell his fury, and augment his might.

“ As Lionel our bands to conquest led,  
In arms unmatched, and strew'd the field with  
dead,

A random arrow pierc'd his courser's brain,  
And crush'd beneath its weight he prest the plain.  
The Saxon chief exulting at the view,  
Wav'd his keen sword, and t'ward the hero flew  
With lightning-speed—The meditated blow  
To ward, and screen him from his ruthless foe,  
A gentle youth spurr'd swiftly o'er the field,  
And smote, but vainly smote, th' impassive shield  
Of gloomy Ulfen ; who in fury cried :  
Rash boy ! full dearly shalt thou rue the pride  
That urg'd thee, mid the strife of spears, to wage  
Unequal war, and brave a champion's rage.  
Ah ! cruel was the threat, and dire the blow,  
That laid our weak, yet kind associate low :

But

But soon, releas'd from his incumbent steed,  
Brave Lionel aveng'd the ruthless deed.  
Stern Ulfín fell beneath his force subdued,  
The Saxons fled, and death their flight pursu'd.

“ My friend, whose gentle breast is pity's throne,  
But not to thee is Lionel unknown,  
T' unloose his kind preserver's helmet, flew,  
But ah, what horror seiz'd his soul to view  
(As bath'd in summer showers, her languid head  
'The lily droops) his ever constant maid  
Pale, sinking on the plain !—in evil hour  
Beneath the storm thus sunk the fairest flower  
That deck'd the field of glory—was it thine  
Amid the shock of clashing arms to shine ?  
Ah no, sweet maid ! a father claim'd thy care,  
Now sunk with grief, too weighty long to bear ;  
A lover too, with anguish wild distraught—  
Can he endure a life so dearly bought ?

“ I mark'd where lost in speechless woe he stood,  
And hast'ned to his aid : the gushing blood  
I strove to staunch ; and o'er the fatal wound,  
My folded scarf with trembling haste I bound.

“ As now, wild-gazing on the hapless maid,  
With dire intent he grasp'd the reeking blade,  
Her eye-lids she unclos'd, his hand she prest  
With trembling hand, and thus the youth address'd:

“ If, as I trust, thy Guendolen was dear,  
I charge thee from the murderous thought forbear.

Let

Let me not die in vain, nor thou despise  
That life, which dearer than my own I prize :  
Then we shall meet in happier realms, and prove  
The joys that virtue crown, and faithful love !  
To sooth her parting soul the knight complied,  
Cheer'd with the thought, she faintly smiled and  
died."

Thus Arthur : " Say, what yet I dread to know,  
Lives still our friend beneath the weight of woe ?"

" If that may life be call'd, the knight replies,  
In silent anguish, tears, and broken sighs,  
To shun the sight of man, the face of day,  
And wear in lonely shades the hours away.  
He lives—But ah ! with me his fate deplore,  
He lives to friendship, and to fame no more.  
To roam the wild, to stem the furling main,  
And mix with warriors in th' embattled plain,  
Be henceforth mine alone : the rage of fight,  
And shouts of heroes give severe delight.  
Then, tho' they fall, they fall as suits the brave ;  
And sweet the sorrow that bedews their grave.  
Of them we think with joy—their acts of fame  
Rise grateful on the soul, that glows with kindred  
flame.

But may I ne'er again the witness prove  
To the deep sorrows of despairing love ;  
To beauty blasted in its opening bloom,  
And valour pining o'er the silent tomb."

N

" Full

“Full well, the prince return’d, thy heart I know,  
That feels severely thus another’s woe.  
But wish not these emotions e’er suppress,  
That sadly soothing harmonize the breast.  
Haste, haste, ye hours! when Inogen’s sweet smiles  
Shall more than recompence her Arthur’s toils :  
Who ne’er unpitied saw another grieve,  
Nor mark’d distress she strove not to relieve.  
Then, the sad victim of disastrous love  
Shall tender friendship’s soft attentions prove.  
His oft-repeated tale of woe we’ll hear,  
And frequent drop the sympathetic tear.  
His Guendolen shall be our constant theme :—  
For weak the thought to check th’ impetuous  
stream  
Of high-swoll’n sorrow : give the torrent way,  
The turbid billows of themselves decay.  
Our care, and time’s soft hand, may from his breast  
The characters, by anguish deep impress’d,  
Erase ; tumultuous passions cease to flow,  
And calm regret succeed the storms of woe.”

And now emerging from the shades, they spied  
On the wild heath, a mossy rock beside,  
In pensive sorrow lost, a female stand,  
Her drooping head supported on her hand.  
Swift they approach’d, she started at the view,  
For well the prince th’ afflicted virgin knew.

“How



“ How happy thus to meet, he raptur’d said,  
 The dear companion of my lovely maid !  
 Ten thousand tender questions I would ask,  
 And sure to Ellena no cruel task,  
 Of her my soul adores.”—With streaming eyes,  
 Silent awhile she stands, and thus replies.

“ Unhappy prince ! whom I in grief behold,  
 A dreadful tale must Ellena unfold :  
 With patience steel thy breast ; and learn to bear  
 Those ills that must thy soul with anguish tear.  
 A sweet abode, by Merlin’s art design’d,  
 Long time thy Inogen and me confin’d :  
 There, pleas’d I dwelt, convinc’d no mortal power,  
 Without his aid, could pierce the secret bower.  
 And there, thy praise, O Arthur ! was our theme,  
 E’en from the rising to the setting beam.  
 And oft the fair, as she thy actions nam’d,  
 My faint applause, and cold indifference blam’d :  
 And sure her heart is thine—each word, each look,  
 The tender feelings of her heart bespoke.  
 But yester-morn—Oh never to return,  
 That fatal day for which I vainly mourn ;  
 She left the dome, and lost in thought profound,  
 Urg’d her lone course towards th’ encircling  
                   bound.

Such was her frequent wont. At length the sun  
 Had more than half his destin’d journey run :

With boding heart, and trembling haste, the plain  
I cross ; and loudly call, but call in vain :  
The mound I scale ; the fair at length I view,—  
Tho' distant, well thy Inogen I knew,  
Borne on the courser of a stately knight—  
What grief, what horror, seiz'd me at the sight !  
Nor long could I indulge my heart-felt woes,  
Black in the North a threatening cloud arose,  
And wrapt in gloom the sky : the lightning's glare,  
Dire spectres gliding thro' the troubled air,  
Disclos'd ; and while my heart beat thick with  
fear,

Sounds more than mortal burst my listening ear.  
“ Dæmons rejoice ! success our cause has crown'd.  
Let transport in your glowing bosoms bound ;  
Heaven's purpos'd will, and Merlin's power de-  
spise ;

For Inogen's the daring Saxon's prize !”

“ Nor long could I sustain those scenes of dread ;  
I sunk to earth—my wavering senses fled.  
A hoary swain, who on his champain drear,  
By day and night attends his fleecy care,  
Here found me speechless, pale—to him I owe  
My life, devoted to consuming woe.”

The prince, attentive while the virgin speaks,  
(Nor word nor sigh his awful silence breaks)  
Now upward gazes ; lost in thought profound,  
His eyes unmov'd, now fixes on the ground.

To

To deadly paleness fades youth's blooming hue ;  
Cold on his forehead starts the briny dew.  
Now, bending on the maid his flaming eyes,  
In trembling, broken accents thus he cries  
" Thou once wert true, by Inogen approv'd ;  
Lov'd by the fair, my soul most dearly lov'd.  
But if thy subtle tale the virgin wrongs,  
Unpitying vengeance to this arm belongs,  
Thy seeming innocence, thy beauteous form,  
Shall save thee not from wrath's impending storm.  
Oh, yet unsay the words ! unsay, and live,  
Crown'd with my favour—I thy fraud forgive.  
And wilt thou not ? Oh misery extreme !  
What now is glory but a vacant dream ?—  
Yet still I hope—perchance the faithful maid,  
By violence compell'd, or art betray'd,  
Forsook the bower—on that, my soul repose  
Thy trust ; that thought alone can sooth my woes."  
Thus Ellena : " Alas, I mourn thy fate ;  
For yonder swain has tidings to relate,  
That much I fear with deeper wounds will gore  
Thy breast, and add fresh weight to sorrow's store."  
" Hail, prince ! the peasant cried, whose high  
renown  
Has reach'd the shepherd of the lonely down.  
But yesternight, in semblance like the dead,  
Stretch'd on the earth I found this gentle maid.

Nor

Nor savage is my breast, tho' long estrang'd  
From peopled towns, these dreary wilds I've  
rang'd.

Her tale my care repaid : I know thy grief,  
And wish 'twere mine to give thy foul relief.  
Last eve, while streaks of flow-decreasing light  
Broider'd the purple clouds, on yonder height,  
Impending o'er the glade, I pensive lay,  
And mark'd the varied tints of closing day.  
Sudden, a knight and damsel met my view,  
Full swift their courser o'er the valley flew :  
I gazed intent : and lo, athwart their course  
Another warrior came, and brief discourse  
In seeming friendship held ; but soon the ground  
Receiv'd his weight : I heard loud shrieks resound.  
Soon to my view, the dame and ruthless knight  
Were lost : the wood conceal'd them from my  
fight.

And, as this morn I guided to the dell  
Yon maid, to note the hapless youth who fell ;  
Sorely we wept, and cried : "To Britain's lord,  
What added sorrow will thy fate afford ?"—

"Lead to the fatal scene," the prince return'd,  
Whilst his rack'd mind with fierce impatience  
burn'd ;

"Shepherd, lead on !" They went, and in their  
way,

Instarr'd with gems, a golden bracelet lay ;

Not



Nor lay unnotic'd to his piercing eyes :  
Dismounting swift, he seiz'd the radiant prize,  
His former gift, which round her arm, the fair,  
Memorial of his love, had vow'd to wear.  
He prest it to his lips ; with sudden start  
Then backward sprung, as if a scorpion's dart  
His hand had pierc'd. " Alas ! too sure a sign,  
He cried, that Inogen's no longer mine.  
Detested emblem (once how highly priz'd)  
Of love estrang'd, and constancy despis'd,  
Hence from my sight !" — Now Cador's corse he  
view'd,

With hoary moss, and faded leaves bestrew'd.

In days of old, not yet did we invade  
The harmless tenants of the woodland shade,  
The crimson-breasted warbler o'er the slain,  
While frequent rose his melancholy strain,  
With pious care, 'twas all he could, supplied  
The funeral rites, by ruthless man denied.

While from his eyes the gushing tears descend,  
The hero knelt beside his hapless friend :  
His clay-cold hand, within his own, he prest,  
And thus pour'd forth the sorrows of his breast.

" Oh, doom'd too soon fate's dire decrees to  
prove !

Cador, I lov'd thee with a brother's love !  
Could not thy beauteous form, thy tender age,  
Protect thee from destruction's wasteful rage ?

But

But vengeance shall be mine !" he rising said,  
Whilst his hand trembled on the thirsty blade.  
" Yet thou, alas ! no more wilt glad those eyes—  
E'en hope, affliction's last sad refuge, flies  
My cheerless breast : for thee, deceitful fair !  
Alone, I wish'd to breathe the vital air.  
Thee, to my soul, I ever dearer held  
Than fame, or conquest, in th' embattled field :  
Dearer than empire !—Oh, the thought how vain !  
Unless with thee partaking, I disdain  
The pomp of state : the glories of a throne  
To me were irksome, if possess'd alone.  
Joyless, as summer suns that heaven illumine,  
When eastern blasts have nipt spring's opening  
bloom.

Why aggravate my woes ? thy causeless hate  
Had soon consign'd me to the arms of fate.  
Alas ! I needed not a second wound—  
'The youth, who here lies bleeding on the ground,  
Should not have fall'n thro' thee, ungrateful maid !  
Is thus his friendship, thus my love repaid ?  
Alas ! how blind is erring man to fate ?  
Thy doom, O Lionel ! I mourn'd so late,  
Excites but envy now—let Arthur share  
Thy pity, and exchange the tender tear  
He gave to thee—thy happier fortune prize !  
Pure is thy love, an inmate of the skies  
Shall sooth thy soul, and fan the sacred flame,  
While mine is darken'd with despair and shame."

This

This said, while agony his bosom wrung,  
Prostrate on earth, his trembling limbs he flung.  
Cradoc, who mark'd his fierce conflicting throes,  
As in his melting heart compassion rose,  
Approach'd ; his hand he grasp'd, and while the  
tear

Swell'd in his eyes, thus urg'd his speech severe.

“ Is this the Saxon's dread, and Britain's boast,  
'This knight in mean despair, ignobly lost,  
Shall thus a gallant youth's untimely fall,  
Who meets the common fate ordain'd to all,  
Like a soft virgin's, shake th' heroic mind,  
For glorious acts, for empire's toils design'd ?  
How weak, how poor ! or shall a luckless maid,  
Thy love betraying, or herself betray'd,  
Still may'st thou doubt, excite these storms of woe  
'That lay the honours of the mighty low ?  
Awake ! fame calls thee, vengeance bids thee rise ;  
Yon bleeding corse aloud for vengeance cries.  
If thou its sacred voice refuse to hear,  
By him who rules the vaulted skies I swear,  
Thy Cadoc's foe this instant to pursue,  
And claim the fight, the fame to Arthur due !”

As starts the fever'd wretch in wild affright,  
Waked from the troubled visions of the night,  
The prince arose ; his eyes on Cradoc turn'd,  
Thro' sorrow's tear, the flames of anger burn'd.

“ Harsh

“ Harsh are thy words, he cried, and rude thy  
zeal ;

’Tis thine to reason, but ’tis mine to feel.

Thou seek the foe ? full bold is the design—

But, Cradoc, death or fame, or both are mine !”

Frowning, he speaks ; the barbed steed bestrides,  
And gores with needle’s steel his panting sides.  
The maid, the shepherd wept, and Cradoc  
mourn’d,

To see his purport kind, so ill return’d :

But far more deeply felt, than words unkind,

The woes that rack’d his much-lov’d hero’s mind.

Then, trusting to the swain th’ afflicted fair,

With ample promise to reward his care,

He onward urg’d his steed ; and thro’ the wood

With friendly haste the warrior’s course pursu’d.

But now to Inogen the strains belong :

Bright maid, deserving of a nobler song.

Sprinkled with hoary dew, and wrapt in night,

Beneath th’ embowering shades she bends her  
flight ;

And, terror-struck, in every gale that blows,

Hears the swift footsteps of pursuing foes.

The branches seize her lightly-waving hair ;

Her robes, rude thorns and pointed brambles tear :

The brake she pierces, and o’er crags she bounds,

Swift as the timid roe, nor heeds her painful  
wounds.

Here



Here fain the muse her mournful tale would  
close,

But fears on fears increas'd, and woes on woes.  
The forest now was pass'd, night roll'd away  
Her fable vapours, and the morning ray  
Chequer'd the east of heaven with dubious light,  
As o'er the champain drear she urg'd her flight.

At length her feeble limbs their aid deny :  
She faints, she staggers ; and beholding nigh  
A pine-clad height in dusky robes array'd,  
She seeks repose beneath the grateful shade.

Beside the place where lay th' afflicted dame,  
Stern Hacon, and his warrior minstrels came,  
Oswald and Eric : in their arms they bore  
The youth who sunk amid the battle's roar,  
Ill-fated Sweno. " Here, the monarch cries,  
Let us the last funereal obsequies  
Grant to my hapless son : and be the light  
Of morn a witness to our solemn rite.  
Place his strong lance, and buckler in the grave\* ;  
Such honours suit the spirits of the brave :

Then

\* Of this ancient custom an instance was given p. 94. An older one occurs in Plutarch's life of Theseus ; who mentions that his supposed tomb in the island of Scyros being opened by command of Cymon ; bones of a vast size, a spear pointed with brass, and a sword, were found in it. In Ezekiel, c. xxxii. v. 27. it is said of Mesech and Tubal, that " they shall not lie with the mighty which are gone down to hell with their  
their

Then o'er the cell let stones memorial rise :  
 And ere to Odin's hall thy spirit flies,  
 On thy sad fire with pitying eye look down,  
 Till keen revenge his soul with rapture crown !  
 Together then, for now the light of day,  
 Man's friendly converse, nature's rich array,  
 Is hateful all, we'll seek the bright abode,  
 Where sit the chiefs of old around their warrior  
                   god."

    The bards obey : their keen-edg'd falchions  
                   wound  
 Earth's yielding bosom, and the stubborn ground,  
 By toil subdu'd, a gloomy depth disclos'd ;  
 And there in night the hapless youth repos'd.

their weapons of war, and they have laid their swords under their heads," &c. that is, they shall not be buried with their arms like brave men. It has been conjectured, that by Mesech and Tubal, the Scythians or some neighbouring people were meant ; and it is generally thought that the Grecians were descended from that numerous and wide-extended race. The heaps of stone or earth, of which so many still remain among us, accumulated in honour of distinguished leaders, and pillars of stone erected to their memory, was a custom not peculiar to the Goths, but prevailed among the Jews likewise, and other ancient nations. It is particularly noticed in the second book of Samuel, c. xviii. v. 17, 18. And in the Hercules Furens of Euripides, Theseus assures his friend that the Athenians shall offer sacrifices, and erect heaps of stones to his memory. ΟυσΤΙΑΣΙ, ΛΑΝΘΑΙΤΙ Τ' ΕΞΟΓΚΟΙΜΑΣΙ.

The

The fire, while down his furrow'd cheek the  
tear

Of anguish trickled, bade his minstrels rear  
The strain funereal—when a rustling sound  
Rose in th' adjacent brake : he gazed around,  
And mark'd advancing slow, the British fair,  
With trembling footsteps and dejected air.  
“ Say, who art thou, with fury-gleaming eyes,  
And frowning brow, the haughty monarch cries ;  
Who thus hast dar'd from covert shades to view  
The rites sepulchral to the mighty due ?  
Hast mark'd those tears a warrior should disdain,  
Wrung from th' indignant heart, that flow in  
vain ? ”

As sounds the lyre suspended, when the wings  
Of zephyr lightly sweep its trembling strings,  
She thus replied in accents sweet and low,  
“ I came not here to mark thy secret woe.  
Alas, another's grief I need not share—  
Too great my own, too weighty long to bear !  
Oh; when thou know'st my fate thro' him I lov'd  
What various ills lost Inogen has prov'd ”—

“ Ha, Inogen ! exulting, he replies,  
Malignant transport gleaming in his eyes,  
Fate, thou hast done enough : revenge is mine—  
My soul desponding shall no more repine  
At unrequited wrongs. 'Thro' thee my friends  
Are fall'n ; and Sweno to the grave descends

In

In manhood's bloom. Seize, Eric, seize the maid !  
Strict retribution shall be amply paid.

Thy blood, my much-lov'd Sweno's shall atone,  
And Arthur mid the pride of triumph groan."

The bard, obedient to his ruthless lord,  
Approach'd the maid, and wav'd th' un pitying  
sword.

With look dejected, and with folded hands,  
Affliction's sculptur'd form, the virgin stands ;  
Then meekly lifts her pious glance on high ;  
Her hope, her trust, in him who rules the sky,  
Is placed alone—When lo ! with loosen'd rein  
A youthful knight came thundering o'er the plain.  
High tower'd his helm, his arms illum'd the field,  
\* But no device adorn'd his argent shield.

“ Stay

\* Ashmole, in his *History of the Most noble Order of the Garter*, affirms, “ that the true cause of Edward's creating that order was, the restoration of king Arthur's *Round Table* ; to invite hither the gallant spirits from abroad, and endear them to himself.” And it is said in the *Memoirs of Ancient Chivalry*, that the shields of knights were white the first year after their reception, in imitation of the knights of the *Round Table*. Several writers indeed have considered Arthur as the father of chivalry, and supposed that the first establishment of the kind was for political purposes, and the encouragement of military enthusiasm. But chivalry may be traced much higher ; and white, unadorned shields were in very ancient times borne by the candidates for martial glory, who had not yet distinguished themselves by any remarkable exploit. The  
shields



“ Stay your rash hands ! impatient thus he  
spoke,  
Can beauty’s charms relentless wrath provoke ?”  
“ Away, vain youth ! stern Hacon cried, away,  
Nor rashly tempt thy fate—’tis death to stay.  
Eric, perform my will !” As o’er the maid  
In act to strike, the minstrel rear’d his blade,

shields of Æschylus’ “ seven chiefs against Thebes” are described as charged with armorial bearings, and the devices are as happily chosen as any in romance ; but those of the private soldiers are mentioned as white and plain : and a youth who had never signalized himself is thus characterized by Virgil.

——“ *parmâ inglorius alba.*”

Mallet observes, that when a young warrior first enlisted among the Scandinavians, they gave him a white and smooth buckler, which was called the *shield of expectation* ; and, according to Plutarch, the greatest part of the Cimbri (see his life of Marius) in their expedition against the Romans, had only white bucklers. These we may suppose were young men who had never performed any memorable exploit. Those who had, it seems most probable, like the heroes of Greece, assumed armorial bearings and impresses at a very early period of time : from which, and not from those adopted in the crusades, as some have conjectured, we may trace the origin of hereditary coats of arms. Hamlet, towards the durability of whose fame the pen of Shakspeare has contributed more than could be effected by the songs of the Scalds, or records of history, is celebrated by Saxo-Grammaticus (I. 4.) for possessing a shield in which his most remarkable actions were exquisitely delineated.

Like



Reckless of danger on the knight he flies ;  
And bursting blood their mail with crimson dies.

But ah ! not long could age the conflict bear,  
Whose guide was fury, and whose strength despair.  
Deep in his breast he feels the deadly wound,  
And gnaws in bootless rage th' unconscious ground.

Where now are all thy glories, haughty king !  
Thy stately towers, thy halls that wont to ring  
With festive joy, or music's lofty strain,  
Thy stern-brow'd warriors, and thy wide domain ?  
Thy days are with the past—the fleeting scene  
Shall change, and be as thou hadst never been !  
Thro' thy lone halls shall sigh the breeze of night,  
And rust consume the trophies of thy might :  
Thy friends shall sink beneath the ruthless sword ;  
Or yield reluctant to a foreign lord :  
On Norway's coast thy deeds be heard no more,  
And thy fame wither on a distant shore !

As now the half-expiring maiden view'd  
The knight triumphant, and her foes subdu'd :  
“ Bless, bounteous heaven !” thus, as to earth she  
bends

Her suppliant knee, the fervent prayer ascends,  
“ Oh bless, for sure to thee the cause belongs,  
This brave avenger of a virgin's wrongs.  
In war, be his the trophies of renown !  
His hours of peace with joys perpetual crown !”

O

“ To

“ To save thee, fair one, from a ruthless foe,  
Is the sole transport I shall ever know”—  
Thus sinking on the ground, he faint replied,  
While from his wounds fast flow'd the sanguine  
tide.

With panting heart, and sorrow-streaming eyes,  
The gentle maid to his assistance flies :  
The riven breast-plate she unbound, and tore  
Her beauteous locks to staunch the rushing gore.

As o'er her darling child the matron bends  
When fell disease his tender fabric rends,  
Thus o'er the youth th' afflicted fair inclin'd,  
Nor heard the trampling steed, that now behind,  
Bath'd in hot foam, came panting ; nor espied  
The British hero standing by her side.

“ Ha, Inogen !”—with wonder struck she turns,  
Now terror pales her cheek, now anger burns,  
“ And is it thou !—with trembling voice he cries,  
Th' imperfect accents mix'd with broken sighs,  
“ That o'er a stranger knight—Oh lost to fame !  
Oh dire disgrace to Britain's peerless dame !  
Had I but thus descended to the tomb ;  
Had Inogen thus mourn'd her Arthur's doom,  
My beating breast with joy in death should swell,  
Tho' thro' thy causeless hate my Cadour fell !”

Rous'd at the name, rekindling wrath supplied  
The words that grief and terror had denied.

“ Canst



“ Canst thou, O prince ! of Inogen complain,  
 In whose dark breast deceit and malice reign ?  
 Speak’st thou of Cador with dissembled tears ?  
 ‘Thro’ falsehood’s mist thy guilt more widely glares.  
 But now I fear thee not—Of this posselt”—  
 A sword she seiz’d, and held it to her breast.  
 “ I lov’d thee, cruel man ! my soul was thine—  
 That idle love I to the winds consign.  
 Dare not approach, unless to glut thine ire,  
 Thou long’st to view me at thy feet expire.”

In speechless agony the hero stood ;  
 His hair uplifted rose, his curdled blood  
 Forgot to flow : not such had been his form  
 In war’s fierce shock, in danger’s direst storm :  
 Not such, thro’ yawning earth in horror’s hue,  
 Had hell’s black regions open’d to his view.

“ Oh Inogen ! long pausing, he replies,  
 Lo ! from thy sight the hapless Arthur flies ;  
 And bears the barbed shaft, that, deep impress  
 By causeless hatred, rankles in his breast,  
 To secret shades ; and tho’, his fate unknown,  
 Unpitied, there he pours the dying groan,  
 Be thine life’s brightest joys—nor ever dread  
 The just reproaches of his injur’d shade !

He ceas’d : on high the thunder’s voice was  
                   heard,  
 While robed in light, heaven’s azure vault ap-  
                   pear’d :

Propitious omen—thro' the sky serene,  
Rapid as thought, a fable cloud was seen  
Smooth-gliding onward; which approaching near  
In liquid air dissolv'd. The hoary seer  
Of Britain stood before their view confest,  
And thus th' astonish'd prince, and maid addrest.

“ For all the blessings that to heaven ye owe,  
With grateful rapture let your bosoms glow.  
The scene of fate undrawn, no more displays  
Visions of dread to shade your future days.  
When Inogen, my weak, deluded child,  
By fraudulent vows, and semblant love beguil'd—  
Nay, weep not, let no fears thy breast alarm;  
Thy troubles past a father's wrath disarm,—  
When she forsook her solitary bower,  
Her fame, her virtue to the Saxon's power  
She gave—no Arthur to the dreary wood  
Convey'd thee, guiltless he of Cadur's blood.  
The Dacian king, from Hengist's brutal lust  
Preserv'd thee, and unconscious stretch'd in dust  
His bold ally: by mutual wounds they fell;  
And baffled thus, the deep-laid schemes of hell.  
The foes whom Arthur's force could ne'er subdue,  
By magic guarded, magic art o'erthrew,  
Thus oft the secret snare when falsehood spreads,  
Herself she fetters in the subtle threads:  
And when dark malice aims the deadly wound,  
Th' envenom'd shafts against herself rebound.

And

And had not thus delusion warp'd your mind,  
 She scorn'd thy passion, thou thy suit resign'd ;  
 'Th' unhallow'd sisters, conscious of the fame,  
 The well-earn'd honours that would crown thy  
                                          name,

With such dire skill the web of fate had wove,  
 That not thy prowess, nor her constant love  
 Had saved you from their power : but now is lost  
 That power—where, cinctur'd with eternal frost,  
 On Thule's distant shore, amid the clouds,  
 Its glittering head aspiring \* Hecla shrouds !  
 In whose dark cells internal thunders roar,  
 While down its sides the flaming torrents pour,  
 And, urg'd by throes convulsive, to the skies  
 Loud-hissing streams, and glowing rocks arise ;  
 There, groaning in its central cave profound,  
 Tortur'd they lie, with chains of darkness bound,  
 There let them, mid the echoing vault, complain,  
 And gnash their teeth, and foam, and rage in vain.  
 For soon, thro' thee, religion's purer beam  
 Shall wide-diffusive, o'er those regions stream,  
 Late subject to their will : before its ray  
 Their fear-form'd gods shall fade in night away.

\* Hecla may be considered as the *Ætna* of the North. It was supposed by the Gothic nations, before and after the introduction of Christianity, to have been the receptacle of sinners, in which they expiated their offences.

Ol. Mag. L. 2. C. 2. 3. Bart. L. 2. c. 6.

Does Inogen still feel some pangs of woe  
At her brave champion's fate; would Arthur  
    know,

What generous youth in fight successful prov'd,  
And sav'd from barbarous men the fair he lov'd ?  
Say, while I thus his steely casque unbind,  
Brings not remembrance to thy grateful mind  
Young Ivar's features, who to Britain came  
In thy defence, to win the meed of fame ?  
Nor mortal are his wounds, tho' deep imprest,  
The hostile weapons gor'd his generous breast:  
May ne'er mischance annoy the knight who draws  
His righteous sword in helpless virtue's cause !  
Arise, brave youth !" he wav'd his wand on high,  
" Arise, and thank the power who rules the sky !"

With strength restor'd from earth he sprung ;  
    amaz'd,

On Merlin, Arthur, Inogen, he gaz'd :  
While silent joy the virgin's soul possess'd,  
The British hero to his glowing breast  
Clasps her bold champion, and in rapture cries :  
" A life that dearer than my own I prize,  
To thee I owe ; and, ever, best of friends !  
That deed of honour which all praise transcends,  
Within this grateful breast shall dwell enshrined,  
While memory keeps possession of my mind.  
And sure, since Truth's bright beams have now  
    reveal'd,

What fraud too long in error's mist conceal'd,

My



My fair will from her gentle breast remove  
Injurious doubts of my unchanging love :  
Her plighted vow, her kind consent, at last  
'Tis mine to claim : the storm of danger past,  
Deign to partake the throne thou'rt born to grace,  
And, blessing Arthur, bless a generous race !

Doubtful, irresolute, she nought replies,  
But bends on Merlin her enquiring eyes.  
With fond paternal smiles he view'd the maid,  
'Then grasp'd her hand, and thus to Arthur said.  
" Accept this earnest of a heart that's thine ;  
The fair to thee with pleasure I resign."

The prince, while extacy his soul possest,  
To his warm lips, the hand soft-yielding prest.  
Consenting smiles her soul accordant speak,  
And, as the crimson glow distains her cheek,  
Joy's sweet sensations in her breast arise,  
And dart their radiance thro' her tearful eyes.

At break of morn, thus blend with summer  
    showers,  
Heaven's roseate beams, and wake the drooping  
    flowers ;  
Its brightest tints, each opening blossom shows,  
And robed in liquid light more richly glows.

The sage proceeds : " From this auspicious day,  
Th' impending clouds of danger roll'd away,  
May never fell distrust your peace annoy,  
But your past woes enhance your future joy !

Hail,

Hail, king of Britain ! may thy worth adorn  
Th' exalted state ; on fame's strong pinions borne,  
May to remotest realms thy acts extend,  
And to thy power each foe submissive bend !  
But oh, too far urge not the thirst of fame !  
Bright, but destructive, is Ambition's flame.  
Her cloud-aspiring temple shines afar,  
Adorn'd with trophies, and the spoils of war,  
Attractive to the view—but mark beneath !  
The baseless fabric o'er the vault of death  
Hangs loosely-tottering—Thence incessant rise  
The orphan's shrieks, th' afflicted widow's cries,  
And rive the conqueror's breast, tho' thron'd in  
state,

He sits mid shouting crouds in painful pomp elate.

“ Not thus in glory's annals be it thine,  
A meteor with malignant glare to shine.  
Crush stern oppression, and the wrong'd redress ;  
Fight to protect, and conquer but to bless.  
Let laws maintain, let arts adorn thy sway ;  
And blend the olive with the victor bay !  
By acts like these, the first of names acquire ;  
The friend of human-kind, thy country's fire.”

F I N I S.

